

AARON
MARQUEZ
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ARCINIEGA

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES THE AVENGERS

*"This is good
horror comics
meets action
comics."*

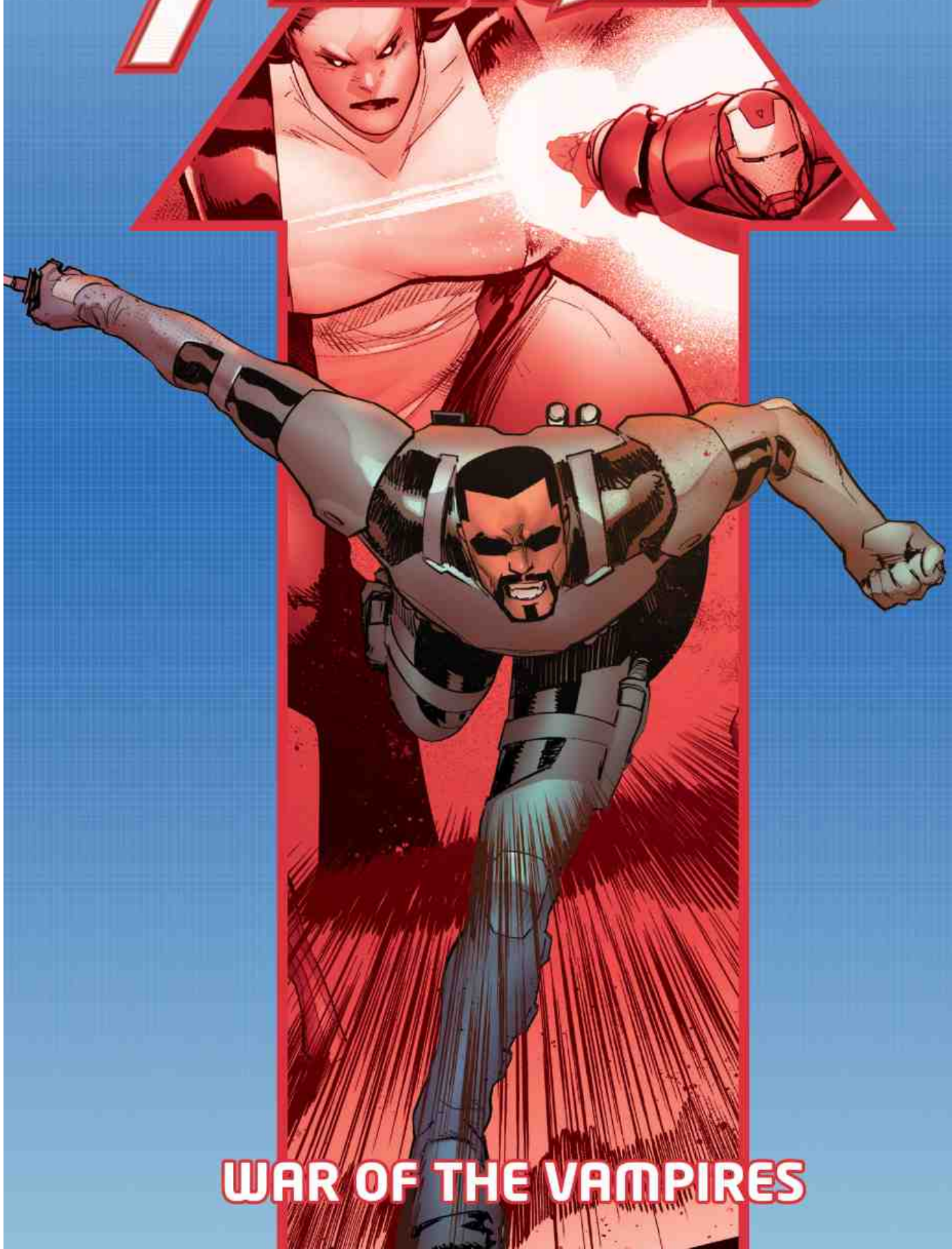
— APT!

WAR OF THE VAMPIRES

MARVEL

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES

THE AVENGERS



WAR OF THE VAMPIRES

ON A DAY UNLIKE ANY OTHER, A DARK CELESTIAL INVASION LED IRON MAN, THOR AND CAPTAIN AMERICA TO RE-FORM THE AVENGERS, ADDING BLACK PANTHER, CAPTAIN MARVEL, SHE-HULK AND GHOST RIDER TO THEIR RANKS.

BUT ONE MILLION YEARS BEFORE THEM, A PREHISTORIC TEAM OF HEROES LED BY ODIN DEFENDED THE WORLD FROM ANY THREAT, NO MATTER HOW COLOSSAL. AND AMONG THEM WAS THE VERY FIRST IRON FIST.



EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES **THE AVENGERS** **WAR OF THE VAMPIRES**

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13 THE GIRL WHO PUNCHED THE DRAGON



ONE MILLION YEARS AGO.

I WAS BORN IN
A *SECRET CITY*.

ONE THAT FLOWS
BETWEEN WORLDS
LIKE A RIVER
THROUGH THE REEDS.

A GOLDEN CITY WHERE
LIFE REVOLVES AROUND
THE MYSTIC AND THE
MARTIAL ARTS.

WHERE AS A CHILD I
LEARNED TO LEAP ABOVE
THE TREES AND MAKE
MY KNUCKLES AS HARD
AS STONE.

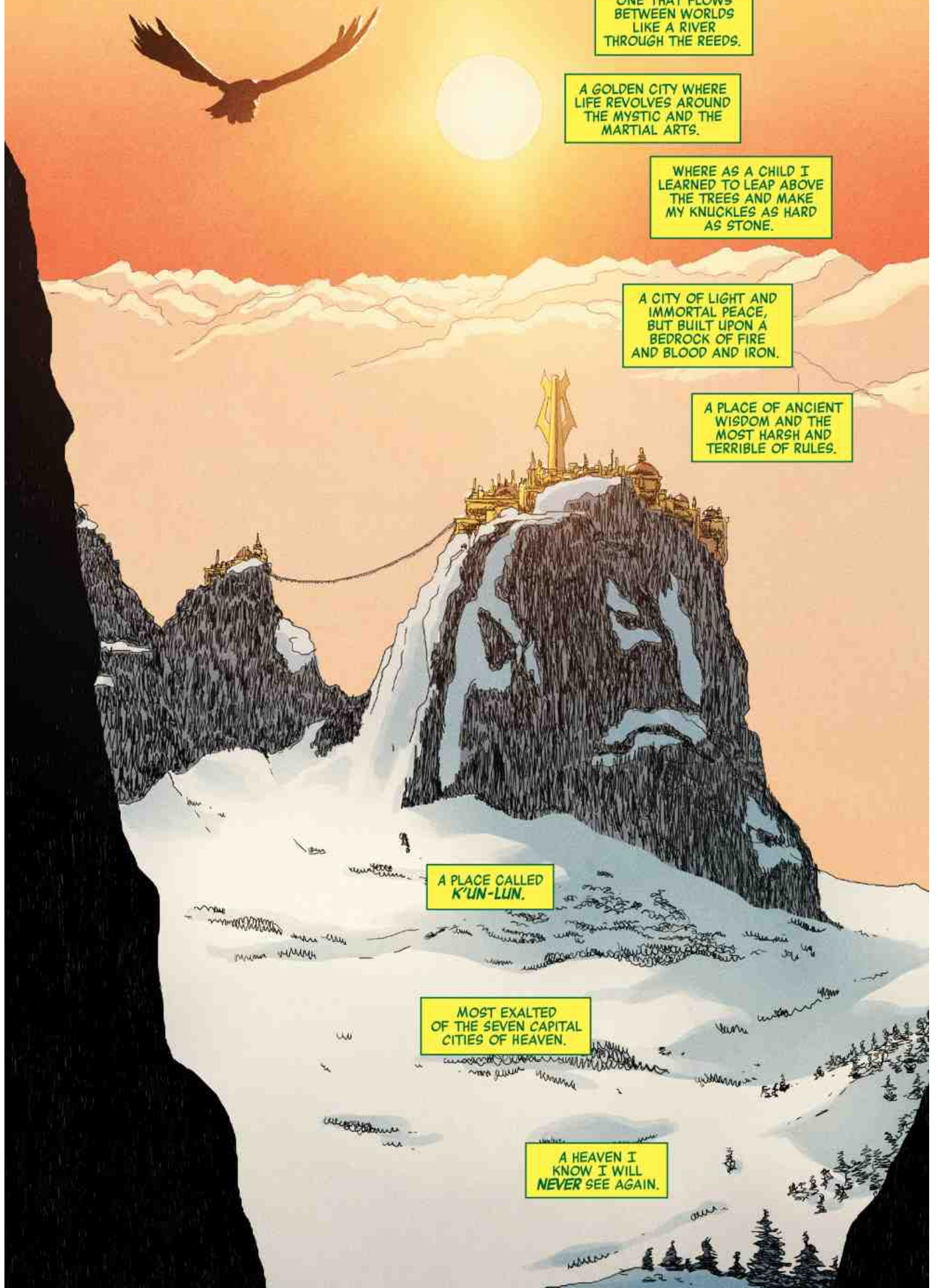
A CITY OF LIGHT AND
IMMORTAL PEACE,
BUT BUILT UPON A
BEDROCK OF FIRE
AND BLOOD AND IRON.

A PLACE OF ANCIENT
WISDOM AND THE
MOST HARSH AND
TERRIBLE OF RULES.

A PLACE CALLED
K'UN-LUN.

MOST EXALTED
OF THE SEVEN CAPITAL
CITIES OF HEAVEN.

A HEAVEN I
KNOW I WILL
NEVER SEE AGAIN.



MY NAME
IS FAN FEI.

AND I AM THE
GREATEST
CRIMINAL IN
THE HISTORY
OF K'UN-LUN.

BRING IN THE
DESPISED!

RIGHT UP
FRONT WITH HER.
I WANT TO MAKE
SURE THE LITTLE
DELINQUENT HAS
A GOOD VIEW.

I'D ONLY EVER
COMMITTED **ONE**
CRIME. BUT IT WAS
A CRIME SO FOUL IT
SENT SHOCKWAVES
THROUGH THE CITY.

IT MADE MY PARENTS TURN
THEIR BACKS ON ME IN SHAME,
MY FRIENDS AND INSTRUCTORS
DISAVOW ME. EVEN THE
DRAGON KINGS KNEW MY NAME,
AND SPAT WHEN THEY SPOKE IT.

MY GREAT CRIME WAS THAT FOR THREE
MONTHS I HAD BEEN SNEAKING BEYOND
THE GATES OF THE CITY, INTO THE
PRIMITIVE WILDS OF THE WORLD WE
CALLED EARTH, AND THERE...

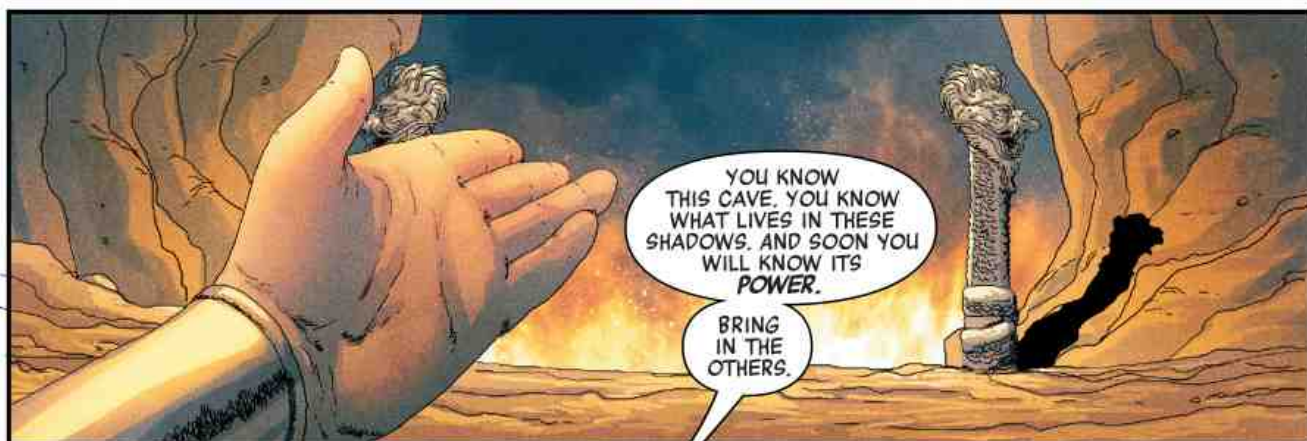
...I TAUGHT
KUNG FU TO
CAVEMEN.

FAN FEI
OF THE GREEN
LOTUS HOUSE.

YOU STAND
GUILTY OF DEFLING OUR
MOST SACRED TRADITIONS
BY DARING TO TEACH OUR
WAYS TO OUTSIDERS.

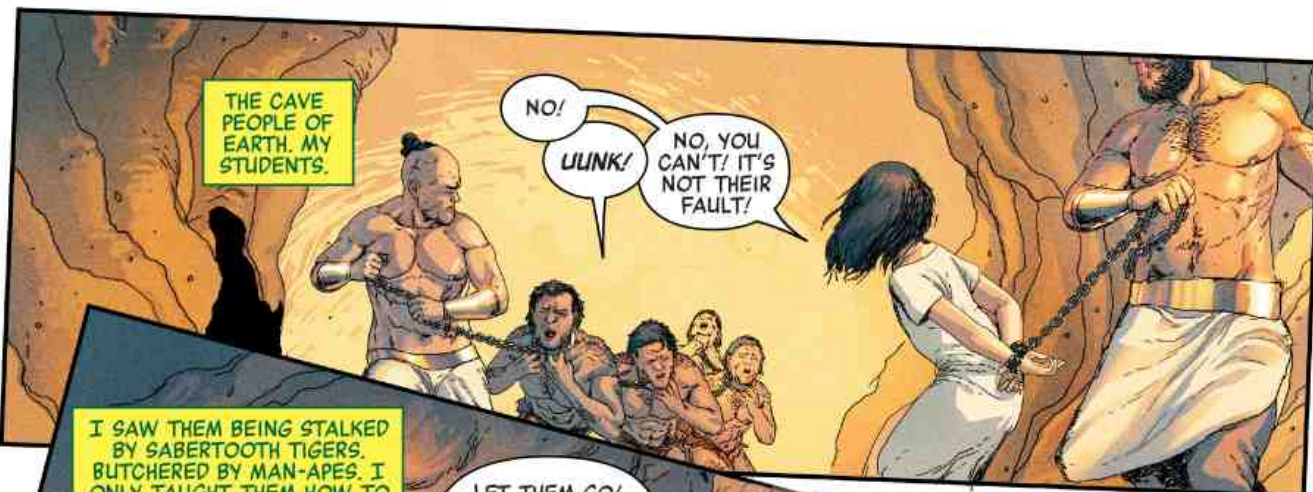
YOU MAY NOW
BEG FOR THE MERCY
OF THE **THUNDERER**.
BUT I ASSURE
YOU, GIRL...

...NO
MERCY SHALL BE
FORTHCOMING.



YOU KNOW
THIS CAVE. YOU KNOW
WHAT LIVES IN THESE
SHADOWS. AND SOON YOU
WILL KNOW ITS
POWER.

BRING
IN THE
OTHERS.



THE CAVE
PEOPLE OF
EARTH. MY
STUDENTS.

NO!

UUNK!

NO, YOU
CAN'T! IT'S
NOT THEIR
FAULT!

I SAW THEM BEING STALKED
BY SABERTOOTH TIGERS.
BUTCHERED BY MAN-APES. I
ONLY TAUGHT THEM HOW TO
DEFEND THEMSELVES.

LET THEM GO!
THEY DIDN'T DO
ANYTHING WRONG!
YOU CAN'T
DO THIS!

WE'RE NOT
DOING ANYTHING.
YOU DOOMED
THESE IGNORANT
BEASTS...



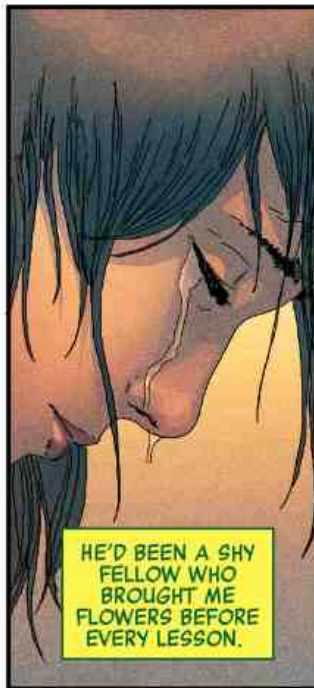
...THE MOMENT
YOU PUT OUR
SECRETS IN THEIR
TINY LITTLE
BRAINS.

K'UN-LUN
WILL NOW
RECLAIM THOSE
SECRETS.

I COULD FEEL
THE DRAGON'S
HEAT BEFORE
I SAW IT.



THE FIRST CAVEMAN WAS LUCKY. THE DRAGON'S BREATH TURNED HIM INTO A FLAMING PUDDLE ALMOST INSTANTLY.



HE'D BEEN A SHY FELLOW WHO BROUGHT ME FLOWERS BEFORE EVERY LESSON.



THE OTHERS TRIED TO CLAW THROUGH THE ROCK TO ESCAPE, BUT THE DRAGON'S SWORD-SIZED FANGS TORE THEM TO SHREDS.



ONE OF THEM MANAGED TO FUTILELY KICK THE MONSTER, EVEN AS HIS ARM WAS BEING DEVoured.

THAT WAS THE MOMENT I WENT FROM CRYING...



UUGH!

LIGHTNING SERPENT SIDE KICK.



...TO DELIVERING SOME KICKS OF MY OWN.



HUKK!



MOTHER TIGER KNUCKLES OF RAGE.



BLOCK THE EXIT! DON'T LET HER ESCAPE!



I HAD NO INTENTION OF ESCAPING.



I LEAPT THROUGH BLOOD AND FIRE WITH NO HOPE OF LIVING TO SEE ANOTHER DAY, TOO ENRAGED TO EVEN BE AFRAID.



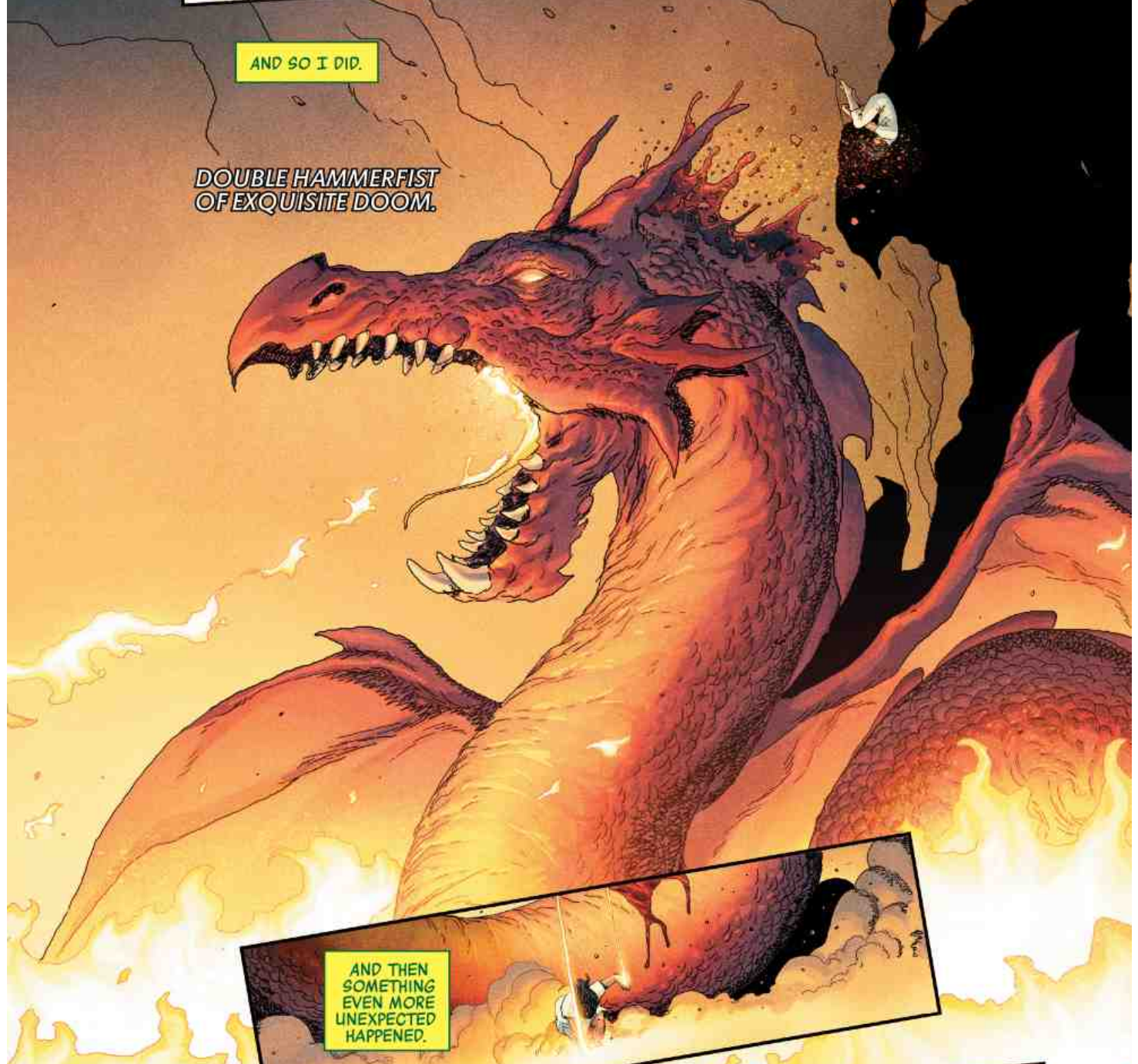
I ONLY KNEW THAT, BEFORE I JOINED MY STUDENTS IN THE BELLY OF THAT FLAMING MONSTROSITY...



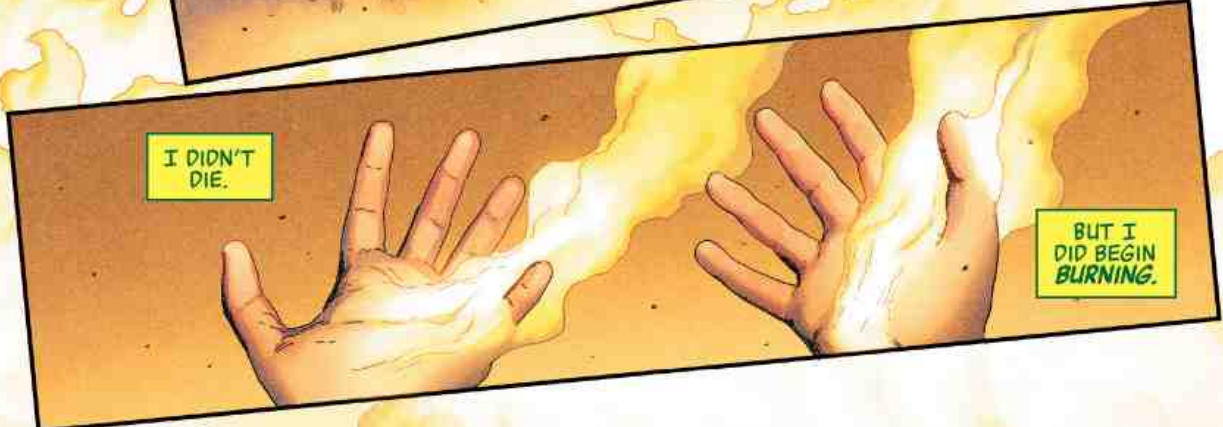
...I WAS GOING TO PUNCH
THE MIGHTY *SHOU-LAO* IN HIS
MISERABLE DRAGON FACE.

AND SO I DID.

DOUBLE HAMMERFIST
OF EXQUISITE DOOM.



AND THEN
SOMETHING
EVEN MORE
UNEXPECTED
HAPPENED.



I DIDN'T
DIE.

BUT I
DID BEGIN
BURNING.



FAN FEI!
BY DARING TO
MURDER THE SACRED
DRAGON DEFENDER OF
K'UN-LUN, YOU COMPOUND
YOUR CRIMES TO AN
UNIMAGINABLE
DEGREE--

--LEAVING US
NO CHOICE BUT TO
LEVY THE GREATEST
PUNISHMENT
POSSIBLE UPON
YOU!



YOU ARE
HEREBY **EXILED**
FROM K'UN-LUN.

LET THE
SCARS OF YOUR
CRIME BE FOREVER
KNOWN AS A MARK
OF **SHAME**. THE
CURSE OF
SHOU-LAO.



YOU LOVE
THESE EARTHMEN
SO MUCH, ENJOY
SPENDING ETERNITY
WITH THEM.

YOU AND
YOUR FOUL
IRON FISTS.



AND THAT WAS
HOW I CAME
TO BE STRANDED
ON EARTH.

WITH A NEW NAME,
AND A CURSED POWER
STOLEN FROM A DEAD
DRAGON. A POWER I DID
NOT YET UNDERSTAND.



CUT OFF FROM
EVERYONE AND
EVERYTHING I'D
EVER KNOWN.

ALL ALONE IN
A STRANGE AND
HARSH LAND.



GGRRRRRR

I WAS 15
YEARS OLD.

AND FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN
MY LIFE...

...I FELT
FREE.

BUT FREEDOM, AS I
WOULD LEARN, ALWAYS
COMES AT A PRICE.

SOMETIMES A
BLOODY ONE.

THE KNEE OF
NIGHTMARES.

GGYAAAGH!

I WALKED THE EARTH, ALONE,
FOR MANY YEARS, ACROSS FROZEN
OCEANS AND SEAS OF FIRE.

THROUGH LANDS OF
UTTER DARKNESS
WHERE THE SKIES
RAINED BLOOD AND
HIDDEN VALLEYS WHERE
LONG-LOST DEVIL
LIZARDS STILL
REIGNED SUPREME.

FROM THE HIGHEST
LIVING MOUNTAIN
TO THE DEEPEST
UNDERGROUND CITY OF
THE VILE DEVIANTS.

ALONG THE WAY, I
ENCOUNTERED MANY
BEINGS WHO NEEDED
TO FEEL THE POWER OF
THE CURSE OF SHOU-LAO.

IN THE GREAT DEAD
FOREST, THAT
DISTINCTION BELONGED
TO THE GORGILLA CLAN.

FEROCIOUS MAN-APES
WHO DOMINATED AND
DESTROYED EVERYTHING
THEY ENCOUNTERED.

...AND THE WEAKER
CREATURES I'D
CHOSEN TO PROTECT.

EVERYTHING
BUT ME...

I WOULDN'T
TRAIN THEM.
NOT AGAIN.

BUT I VOWED
TO FIGHT FOR
THEM, EVEN
THOUGH I COULD
NOT SAY WHY.

WHY DID THESE
PRIMITIVE CREATURES
DESERVE TO PROSPER
MORE THAN ANY OTHER
ANIMAL STRUGGLING TO
SURVIVE IN SUCH A CRUEL
AND HARSH WORLD?

BECAUSE ONE OF
THEM ONCE BROUGHT
ME FLOWERS?

BECAUSE THEY RETURNED
MY GESTURE BY
WORSHIPPING ME AS A GOD?

EVEN AFTER MANY LONG NIGHTS
ALONE IN THE WOODS WITH
NOTHING BUT MY THOUGHTS, I COULD
NOT ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS.

I WAS A POOR EXCUSE
FOR A GOD, ONE WHO
COULD NOT EVEN MASTER
HER OWN POWER.

I WAS THE OUTCAST
KNOWN AS THE
IRON FIST. I HAD NO
PEOPLE, AND THAT WAS
THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.

THOUGH I DID MISS
HAVING SOMEONE
TO TALK TO.

HELLO.

KRAKATOA
FACE EXPLODER.



YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE, ARE YOU?

THIS IS NOT MY WORLD. BUT I STILL KNOW A DEVIL WHEN I SEE ONE.

BEGONE FROM THIS PLACE.

AND LEAVE YOU ALL ALONE AGAIN? THAT WOULD BE TOO CRUEL.

NO, I'M HERE TO HELP YOU, IRON FIST.

WHERE DID YOU HEAR THAT NAME?

THE WHOLE WORLD IS LEARNING YOUR NAME. THE DEVIANTS SCREAM IT IN RAGE. EVEN THE MOTHER OF THE UNDEAD SPEAKS IT WITH FEAR.

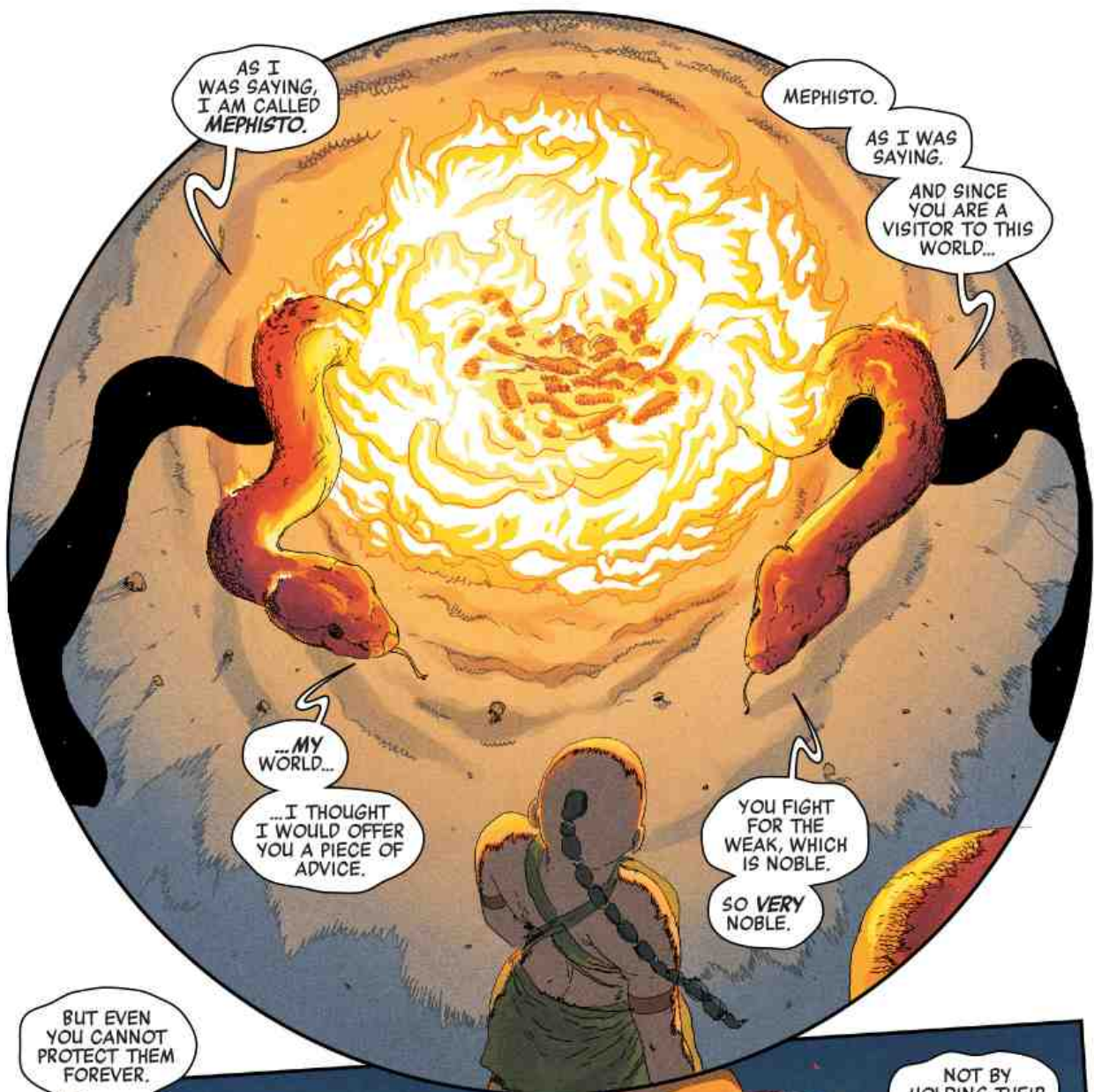
AND WHAT IS YOUR NAME, BEAST?

I'M HAPPY YOU ASKED. PLEASE ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.

I AM CALLED MEPHI--

DRUNKEN MONGOOSE
KNIFE HAND.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOUR NAME IS.



AS I WAS SAYING, I AM CALLED MEPHISTO.

MEPHISTO.

AS I WAS SAYING.

AND SINCE YOU ARE A VISITOR TO THIS WORLD...

...MY WORLD...

...I THOUGHT I WOULD OFFER YOU A PIECE OF ADVICE.

YOU FIGHT FOR THE WEAK, WHICH IS NOBLE.

SO VERY NOBLE.

BUT EVEN YOU CANNOT PROTECT THEM FOREVER.

IF YOU WANT TO SAVE THE WEAK, YOU MUST MAKE THEM STRONG.

NOT BY HOLDING THEIR HANDS.

BUT BY SEIZING THEIR THROATS.



BY CONQUERING THEM.

BY RULING.

IRON FIST, QUEEN OF THE MONKEYS.

HOW DOES THAT SOUND?

IT SOUNDS...



...LIKE I JUST FOUND SOMEONE ELSE IN NEED OF MY FISTS!

THE BLIZZARD TO END ALL BONES.

OH, YOU POOR IRON FOOL.

HA HA HA HA HA!



AFTER THAT NIGHT, I STOPPED KEEPING A FIRE.



BUT MY FISTS
STAYED *BUSY*.

RABID CRANE
CRIPPLE FIST.

THE GORGILLAS GAINED THE
GIFT OF *FIRE*, AND
GENEROUSLY SHARED IT WITH
EVERYONE AROUND THEM.

I HAD MY SUSPICIONS
ABOUT HOW THEY HAD COME
BY THAT KNOWLEDGE.

HA! YOU MAY
HAVE SURVIVED
SHOU-LAO'S FIRE, GIRL,
BUT LET'S SEE HOW
YOU HANDLE
MINE.

LEAP OF 37
AGONIES.

I DIDN'T
UNDERSTAND
THE GAMES
BEING PLAYED
AROUND ME.

I HAD NO
IDEA WHAT
WAS TRULY
AT STAKE.

I FOUGHT LIKE A
BLIND WOMAN. A
BLIND WOMAN WITH
FISTS AS HARD AS...

GULUUGH!

THE APE KING.

THE GORGILLA
ALPHA.

WHO CRACKED SKULLS WITH
A DIAMOND CLUB BIG ENOUGH
TO CHOKE A DEVIL LIZARD.

GORRRGGILLA!!



IN MY
DARKEST DAYS
AND LONGEST
NIGHTS...



...THERE WERE TIMES
I WISHED I HAD
NEVER PUNCHED THAT
STUPID DRAGON.



GORGLINGA!!!

THIS WAS
NOT ONE OF
THEM.



SAME TO
YOU, MY
FRIEND.

THE CURSE OF
SHOU-LAO.



THIS WAY!
FOLLOW ME!

HEH. SUCH
THE LITTLE
HERO.

FOOLISH
GIRL.
DON'T YOU
KNOW?

THIS IS
NOT AN AGE
OF HEROES.

THIS IS AN
AGE OF HELL
ON EARTH.



THE NEXT TIME THE
GORGILLAS ATTACKED,
I KNEW RIGHT
AWAY SOMETHING
WAS DIFFERENT.



THEY DIDN'T COME WITH FIRE OR
DIAMOND OR TRY TO OVERWHELM
ME WITH THEIR NUMBERS.

THE KING
GORGILLA
CAME ALONE.



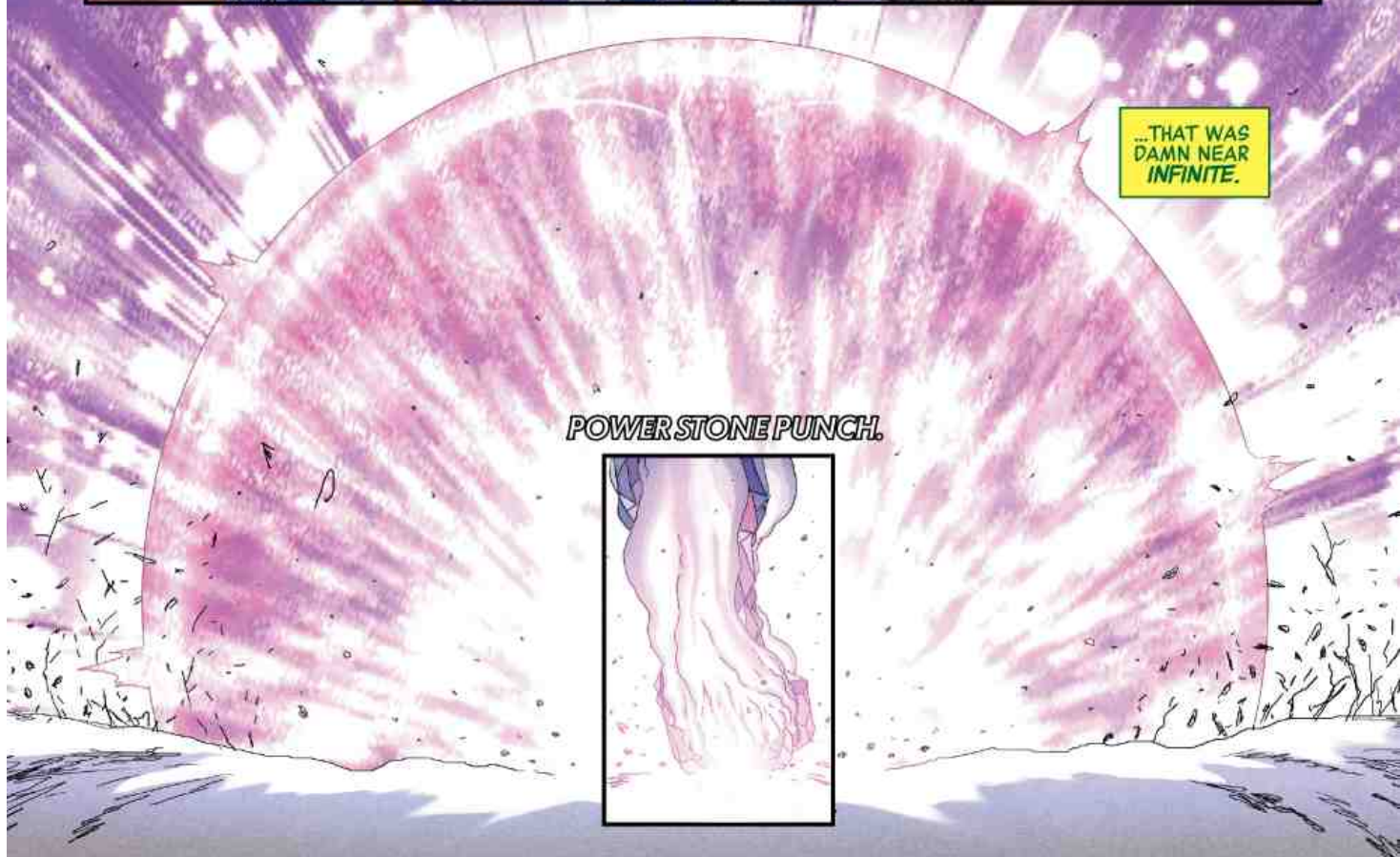
WITH A FIRE IN
HIS EYE THAT
SEEMED FAMILIAR.

AND A
POWER...



...THAT WAS
DAMN NEAR
INFINITE.

POWERSTONE PUNCH.



I DON'T
KNOW WHERE
YOU'VE COME BY THIS
POWER, BUT I AM THE
LIVING WEAPON OF
K'UN-LUN! THE MOST
DANGEROUS
WOMAN IN ALL OF
HEAVEN!

AND NO
POWER ON
EARTH CAN
HOPE TO...



HIS PUNCHES MADE
SHOU-LAO'S FIRE FEEL
LIKE SOFT KISSES.



THE STONE IN HIS
HAND. THAT WAS
THE HEART OF HIS
POWER.

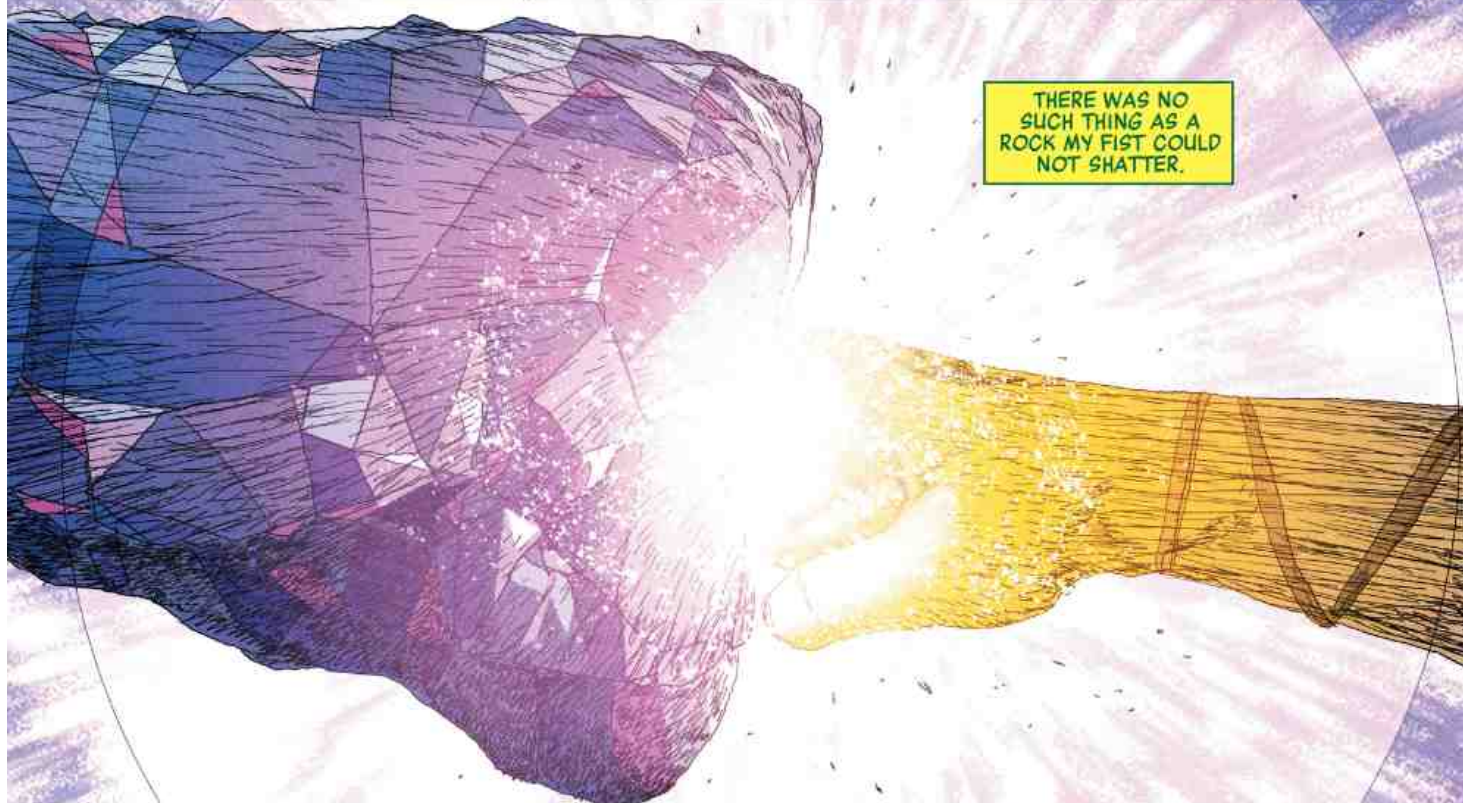


I HAD BEEN
BREAKING ROCKS
WITH MY KNUCKLES
SINCE I WAS 8.

I WAS THE
IRON FIST. THE
GIRL WHO PUNCHED
THE DRAGON.



THERE WAS NO
SUCH THING AS A
ROCK MY FIST COULD
NOT SHATTER.



THOOM

OR SO I
THOUGHT.

BUT THIS
WAS NOT
K'UN-LUN.



AND THIS WAS
NO AGE OF HEROES.

IT WAS A TIME
OF FOOLISH GIRLS
AND FEROCIOUS
SUPER-GORILLAS.



OF FIRE
AND BLOOD.



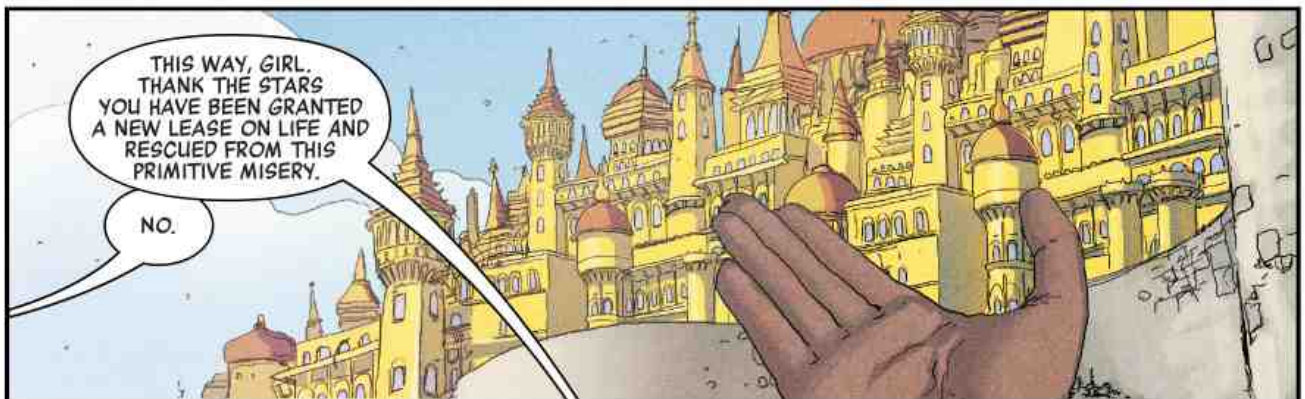
AND ALL THE
PAIN YOU CAN
IMAGINE.

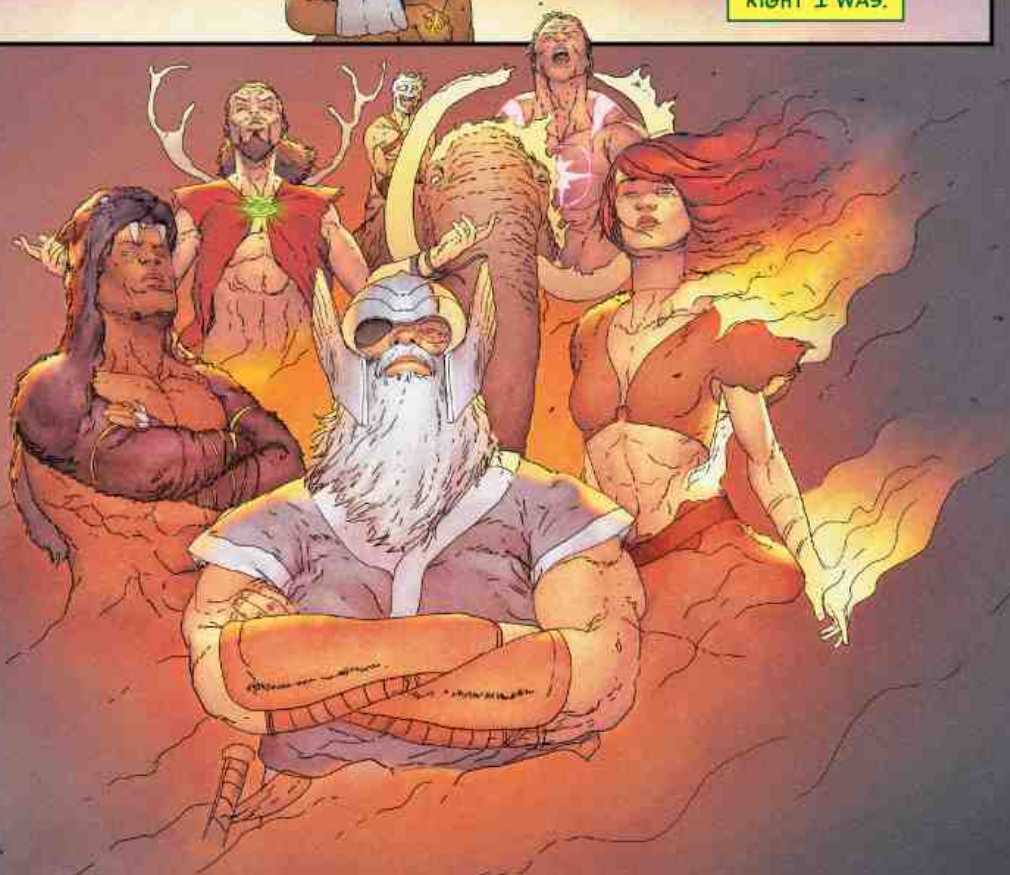


AND PLENTY
I'M SURE YOU
CANNOT.



"IT IS A MIRACLE. A
MOST BEAUTIFUL
SIGHT INDEED. SO
TELL ME, IRON FIST..."





AND NO IDEA HOW
GRAND AND GLORIOUS
AND DEVASTATING
THAT FIGHT WOULD BE.

OR THAT I
WOULD NOT
BE FIGHTING
IT ALONE.

GODS HELP ME, I HAD NO
IDEA HOW MANY WOULD HAVE
TO FALL BENEATH MY BLOOD-
DRENCHED FISTS BEFORE IT
COULD BE FINISHED.



IF IT EVER
REALLY FINISHED
AT ALL.

14 THE FALL OF CASTLE DRACULA



ROMANIA.
THE CARPATHIAN
MOUNTAINS.

THE ATTACK IS SUDDEN
AND BRUTALLY EFFICIENT.
WHILE SWARMS OF BATS
RAIN NAPALM ON THE
PARAPETS...

...RATS FITTED WITH **SUNBURST**
GRENADES SCURRY THROUGH
THE CASTLE'S LABYRINTHINE
CORRIDORS, REDUCING ITS
INHABITANTS TO WAILING
HUSKS--EVERY MAN, WOMAN
AND MURDEROUS CHILD.

THE SENTRIES OUTSIDE THE MAIN SEPULCHRE HAVE
BEEN STANDING GUARD SINCE THE 15TH CENTURY,
FIGHTING OFF ARMIES OF TURKS AND KNIGHTS
TEMPLAR AND GENERATION AFTER
GENERATION OF VAN HELSINGS.

BUT THEY'VE NEVER FACED ANYTHING QUITE LIKE
THE ROTARY CANNON CURRENTLY FIRING 2,000
WOODEN STAKES A MINUTE INTO THEIR UNDEAD HEARTS.

THE MOST FEARSOME CASTLE
EVER RAISED IS ENGULFED IN
FLAMES, AND BEFORE THE NIGHT
IS THROUGH, WILL BE REDUCED
TO SMOLDERING RUBBLE.

BUT THAT IS NOT ENOUGH TO SATE
THE FURY OF THE SQUAD OF
HEAVILY ARMED INVADERS WHO
NOW FIND THEMSELVES STANDING
OVER AN EMPTY COFFIN, WITH
ONE QUESTION ON THEIR MINDS.

WHERE IS
HE? WHERE'S
THE COWARD
HIDING?



WHERE'S
DRACULA?!

THE SHADOW COLONEL AND HIS LEGION
OF THE UNLIVING HAVE JUST SLAUGHTERED
THE MOST DEVOTED VAMPIRE DISCIPLES
OF THE LORD OF THE DAMNED.

THE LEGION OF THE UNLIVING
ARE VAMPIRES THEMSELVES.

VAMPIRES AT WAR
WITH VAMPIRES.

THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO KNOWS
A THING OR TWO ABOUT THAT SORT
OF CONFLICT. AND HIS NAME IS...



BLADE!
AAAAARRRGH!!!



HSSS! YOU MISERABLE DAYWALKER! YOUR BLOOD'S NOT EVEN WORTH DRINKING!

WE'LL FLUSH IT DOWN THE TOILET ONCE WE'RE DONE TEARING YOU TO PIECES!

YEAH, I WOULDN'T GO IN THERE FOR A WHILE IF I WAS YOU.

ATTENTION, PASSENGERS! THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE NOT VAMPIRES, PLEASE MOVE TO THE REAR OF THE PLANE IN AN ORDERLY FASHION AND STRAP YOURSELVES IN!



THERE MAY BE A BIT OF TURBULENCE, BUT WE'LL HAVE YOU ON THE GROUND SAFE AND SOUND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

YOU HAVE MY WORD AS AN AVENGER!

THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING!



NO! NOT
EVEN THE
AVENGERS WILL
STOP US!

ROXXON AIR FLIGHT 959.
SOMEWHERE OVER SYMKARIA.
TEN MINUTES AFTER BEING HIJACKED BY VAMPIRES.



IF WE STOP
RUNNING, WE'RE
ALL DEAD!

UGGH!

DON'T YOU
KNOW WHAT'S COMING
FOR US?! WHAT'S BEEN
UNLEASHED?! THERE'S NO SAFE
PLACE ANYMORE! THE CASTLE
HAS FALLEN AND NOBODY HAS
ANY SUN-DAMNED IDEA
WHERE DRACULA--



GAAAGH!

YOU DON'T
GOTTA WORRY YOUR
PRETTY VAMP HEAD
ABOUT WHAT'S COMING.
BECAUSE WHATEVER
THE HELL IT IS...



...YOU
BLOODSUCKERS
AIN'T GONNA LIVE
THAT LONG.



BLADE, THIS IS
CAPTAIN MARVEL.
HOW'S IT COMING
BACK THERE?

SILVER NUNCHUCKS.
THAT'S HOW IT'S
COMING.

NOW LEAVE ME
ALONE. IT'S TIME
TO MURDER THE
DOUGHNUTS.

NOT REALLY
HOW THAT
EXPRESSION GOES,
BUT OKAY.



JUST WANTED
TO MAKE SURE YOU
WERE FEELING UP TO
THIS. T'CHALLA WASN'T
HAPPY ABOUT YOU LEAVING
THE INFIRMARY AT
AVENGERS MOUNTAIN
SO SOON.

SINCE WHEN
IS HE EVER HAPPY
ABOUT ANYTHING?
BROODIEST DAMN
RICH MAN I
EVER MET.



THERE'S A
VAMPIRE WAR
GOING ON. IF THE
BLACK PANTHER
THINKS FOR ONE
SECOND I'M
ABOUT TO SIT
THAT OUT...



GAAAAGH!!!



...THEN HE
DON'T KNOW
@%# ABOUT
ME.

C'MON,
SUCKHEAD. TIME
TO RETURN
YOUR SEAT TO
ITS UPRIGHT
POSITION.

WAKANDA. THE GREAT MOUND.

THE MINES ARE CLEAR OF WORKERS, AND THE HATUT ZERAZE ARE STANDING BY TO HOLD THE PERIMETER ABOVEGROUND.

GREAT. SO THAT MEANS THAT DOWN HERE IT'S JUST YOU, ME...

...AND A CRAZED HORDE OF OUR CLOSEST FRIENDS.

HOW'D THAT MANY VAMPIRES EVER GET PAST WAKANDA'S DEFENSES?

THEY TURNED INTO SNAKES AND SLITHERED THROUGH THE SEWERS.

DAMN. THEY MUST WANT THAT VIBRANIUM BAD.

THE FALL OF CASTLE DRACUL HAS CREATED CHAOS AND UPHEAVAL IN EVERY CORNER OF VAMPIRE SOCIETY. THE DIFFERENT FACTIONS ARE TURNING ON ONE ANOTHER.

GETTING THEIR HANDS ON VIBRANIUM WOULD NO DOUBT PUT THIS PARTICULAR SECT AHEAD IN THE UNDEAD ARMS RACE.

HEAR ME, WARRIORS OF THE ADZE CLAN! AS KING OF WAKANDA, YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT I CAN HELP YOU!

PERHAPS EVEN CURE YOU SOMEDAY, IF YOU JUST STAND DOWN!

DON'T THINK THEY'RE LISTENING, T. PRETTY SURE THE ONLY THING THESE GUYS HEAR RIGHT NOW IS THE DINNER BELL.

BUT MY SOLAR CELLS ARE GOOD AND CHARGED. HOW ABOUT YOU, YOUR PANTHERNESS?

SO BE IT. MAY THEIR SOULS AT LAST FIND PEACE ON THE ANCESTRAL PLANE.

A comic book panel showing Iron Man and T'Challa in a battle against vampires. Iron Man, in his red and gold suit, is on the left, firing repulsor beams. T'Challa, in his red and gold vibranium suit, is on the right, also firing. They are surrounded by a bright, fiery orange and yellow light. In the background, there are dark, jagged rock formations. A speech bubble from T'Challa is at the top. At the bottom, there are four text boxes containing internal monologues from both characters.

MAY THE
LIGHT SET
THEM FREE.

THEY'RE NOT HUMAN, TONY STARK TELLS HIMSELF, AS HIS SOLAR-IRRADIATED REPULSOR BEAMS TURN THE FACES AROUND HIM TO BLACKENED CHUNKS OF ASH THAT ARE SOMEHOW STILL SCREAMING.

THEY'RE NOT HUMAN. THEY'RE VAMPIRES. MONSTERS WHO LIVE BY MURDER. THEY MAY SMELL HUMAN WHEN THEY'RE BURNING, BUT THEY'RE DEFINITELY NOT HUMAN.

DEFINITELY NOT.

THESE THINGS ARE HUMAN, T'CHALLA THINKS, CORRUPTED AND DEFORMED, BUT THEY WERE MEN ONCE, JUST LIKE ME.

EACH ONE HE SUCCESSFULLY KILLS HE COUNTS AS A FAILURE, BECAUSE HE COULD NOT SAVE THEM.

THE KING OF WAKANDA WILL HAVE MANY MORE FAILURES BEFORE THE DAY IS THROUGH.

CENTRAL ROMANIA.
THE REGION ONCE KNOWN
AS TRANSYLVANIA.



THIS WAY!
INSIDE THE CHURCH!
EVERYONE!

THE FLAMES OF THE CASTLE ARE STILL
FLICKERING IN THE DISTANCE. AND FOR
HOURS NOW, THE NIGHT HAS BEEN
ALIVE WITH SCREAMS.

BUT THIS IS TRANSYLVANIA. EVERYONE
HERE HAS KNOWN THEIR ENTIRE LIVES
THAT THE DARKNESS HOLDS DANGERS.

AAHH!
THEY'RE COMING
FROM THE SKY!

THAT ONE WE
DON'T HAVE TO
WORRY ABOUT. TRULY
GOD IS WATCHING
OVER US.

YES,
MA'AM.

"HE IS."



NEVER HAVE THESE
PEOPLE SEEN SO MANY
DANGERS ALL AT ONCE.

WHERE DO
YOU THINK YOU'RE
GOING, MEAT?

THEY'RE
GOING WITH
ME!



THE MONSTER METROPOLIS.

DEEP BENEATH THE STREETS OF MANHATTAN.

A CITY OF MONSTERS. RIGHT UNDERNEATH NEW YORK.

MY GEOGRAPHY TEACHER IS GONNA CRAP HIS PANTS WHEN HE HEARS ABOUT THIS.

VAMPIRES FIGHT HULK! OR GO TO HELL!

HELL DOESN'T SOUND SO BAD.

SENDING ROWDY VAMPIRES TO HELL THROUGH MY TRUNK. HOW CRAZY IS IT THAT THIS FEELS RIGHT? IT'S STARTING TO SEEM LIKE I MIGHT ACTUALLY BELONG ON THIS--

YOU DON'T.

HUH? COULD YOU JUST HEAR MY...

YOU ARE NOT AN AVENGER, ROBERTO REYES. YOU ARE VENGEANCE ITSELF. YOU ARE THE FIRES OF HELL IN HUMAN FORM.

WHAT? WHO ARE YOU, KID? HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

I KNOW ALL THE RIDERS' NAMES. GOING BACK TO THE VERY FIRST, THE LITTLE GHOST IN THE SNOW.



HERE IN THE
MONSTER METROPOLIS,
WE KNOW OUR OWN KIND
WHEN WE SEE THEM. AND
SOON THE AVENGERS WILL
SEE YOU AS WELL. FOR
ALL THAT YOU
TRULY ARE.

YOU'RE A
MONSTER, ROBBIE.
YOU'RE THE BIGGEST
HELL-DAMNED MONSTER
THERE EVER WAS
OR WILL BE.

I'M NOT
A **MONSTER**. I
SAVED THE WORLD.
I'M NOT A...



WHO RIDER
MAN TALK TO?
VAMPIRES SMASHING
CITY. TIME FOR
OTHER PLAN.



WAIT, BUT
WHERE'D THE KID
GO? THE CREEPY KID
WITH THE...

JUST WAY
WE PRACTICE. HULK
PLUS RIDER MAN PLUS
HELL CAR EQUAL...



...**FIREBALL
SPECIAL!**

"I'M NOT A MONSTER,"
THE GHOST RIDER
SCREAMS TO
HIMSELF.

BUT HE SWEARS THAT HE CAN
HEAR THE FAINTEST LAUGHTER,
BUBBLING UP FROM SOMEWHERE
DEEP INSIDE...HIS OWN
BURNING SKULL.



AVENGERS MOUNTAIN.

INTESTINAL LEVEL. DETENTION FACILITY.



"WHERE DO I
FIND DRACULA?"

THAT'S ALL
HE SAID.

AND HE
CAME ALONG
PEACEFULLY?

WELL, THOR
DIDN'T REALLY
GIVE HIM MUCH
CHOICE.

SO WE HAVE
NO IDEA WHO
THIS GUY IS?

ALL OUR
SCANNERS ARE ABLE
TO DETERMINE IS THAT
THE SHADOW COLONEL
IS A VAMPIRE.

AND ANY
ATTEMPT TO REMOVE
HIS MASK WOULD TRIGGER
EXPLOSIVES HARD-WIRED
INTO HIS BODY.

TOUGH
CUSTOMER.
ALL RIGHT.

INTERROGATION
TIME IT IS.

SO HOW DO
WE WANNA HANDLE
THIS? THE OLD *GOOD
CAP, BAD CAP*
ROUTINE?

ACTUALLY, I
THINK WE'VE GOT
SOMEONE A BIT
BETTER SUITED FOR
THIS PARTICULAR
JOB.



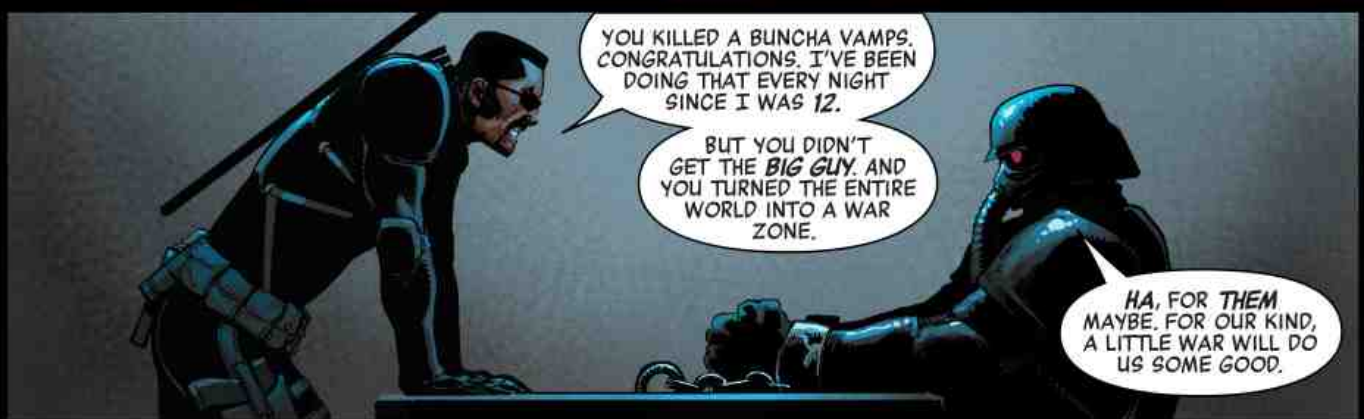
AH, AT
LAST I GET TO
MEET THE WORLD'S
GREATEST VAMPIRE
HUNTER.

HEH. WHO
HAD TO BE RESCUED
FROM DRACULA'S DUNGEONS
BY HIS NEW MASTERS, THE
AVENGERS.

THE SAME
DUNGEONS I
JUST BURNED TO
THE GROUND.

DID YOU COME
TO SAY **THANK YOU**,
BLADE? OR TO ASK
FOR **ADVICE**?

SINCE MY TEAM
AND I JUST DID MORE
IN ONE NIGHT THAN YOU'VE
ACCOMPLISHED IN YOUR
ENTIRE LIFE.



YOU KILLED A BUNCH A VAMPS.
CONGRATULATIONS. I'VE BEEN
DOING THAT EVERY NIGHT
SINCE I WAS 12.

BUT YOU DIDN'T
GET THE **BIG GUY**. AND
YOU TURNED THE ENTIRE
WORLD INTO A WAR
ZONE.

HA, FOR **THEM**
MAYBE. FOR OUR KIND,
A LITTLE WAR WILL DO
US SOME GOOD.



TELL ME THE
TRUTH NOW,
BLADE. JUST
BETWEEN US
FANGERS.

YOU DON'T
REALLY GIVE A
DAMN ABOUT THE
HUMANS, DO
YOU?

I'M ASKING
THE QUESTIONS
HERE.

OH HELL,
YOU **DO**. THAT IS
SO VERY SAD.

I KILL VAMPIRES
BECAUSE THEY'RE
MONSTERS WHO
WOULD MURDER
EVERY LIVING SOUL
ON THE FACE OF
THE EARTH IF LEFT
UNCHECKED.

SOMETHING
TELLS ME YOU'VE
GOT A DIFFERENT
MOTIVATION,
"COLONEL."

HA HA
HAA!

I KNOW THE STORIES ABOUT YOU. BORN IN A WHOREHOUSE. TO A DEAD WOMAN.

SOME FANGER MADE A MEAL OF YOUR MOTHER WHILE YOU WERE STILL INSIDE HER, AND YOU CAME OUT HALF BOY, HALF VAMP.

A DHAMPIR. A DAYWALKER. A CHEAP, WATERED-DOWN COPY.

YOU'VE HATED ALL VAMPIRES EVER SINCE, RIGHT? WITH A BURNING, MURDEROUS PASSION.

BUT I THINK WHO YOU **REALLY** HATE MOST OF ALL BUT JUST CAN'T BRING YOURSELF TO PUT OUT OF THEIR STINKING MISERY...



...IS YOU, BLADE.

YOU'RE NOT A MAN. YOU'RE NOT A VAMPIRE. YOU SURE AREN'T A DAMN AVENGER.

SO JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU?



RRRGGGGH!!!

KEEP TALKING AND I'LL BE THE LAST THING YOU EVER SEE.

HA, YOU WANT ME TO **SHUT UP**? I THOUGHT THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AN INTERROGATION.

YOU HAVEN'T EVEN ASKED ME WHY I'M HERE YET.



I DON'T LIKE HOW THIS IS GOING.

HE'S FAR TOO CONFIDENT. IT WOULD APPEAR THE SHADOW COLONEL **WANTED** TO BE BROUGHT HERE.

HEY, UH, GUYS...



"...WHAT HAPPENED
TO HIS DOG?"

GRRRRGH!

TALK, DAMMIT,
YOU STUPID CURSED
CAR! TELL ME WHAT
THE HELL I AM!

HOW DID
THAT KID KNOW SO
MUCH ABOUT ME?!
AND IS IT TRUE WHAT
HE SAID, THAT
I'M A...

HEY, UH, THIS IS
TONY UP IN THE...
BRAINBRARY. (IS
THAT REALLY WHAT
WE'RE CALLING
IT?)

ANYWAY, I
JUST SAW A DOG
THAT GROWLED AT
ME AND DISAPPEARED
INTO THE WALLS.

IS GHOST
DOG A THING WE'RE
SUPPOSED TO HAVE NOW
AND NOBODY TOLD ME?
BECAUSE THE OTHER DAY
I SAW A TALKING GORILLA
IN THE SHOWERS AND
IT REALLY...

HUH? WHAT
HAPPENED TO
THE LIGHTS?

TONY?

GUYS, THIS
IS ROBBIE IN THE
BOAT DOCK. CAN
ANYBODY HEAR
ME?

GHOST
RIDER.

WHAT?
WHO'S
THERE?



IN THE NAME
OF MEPHISTO.

UGGH. THAT
HURTS A LOT MORE
THAN USUAL!

WHAT'S...

IN THE NAME
OF LORD MARDUK THE
MORNINGSTAR.

"IN THE NAME
OF ZARATHOS
AND ZADKIEL."



WHO ARE
YOU? WHY
ARE YOU...
GAAGGH!

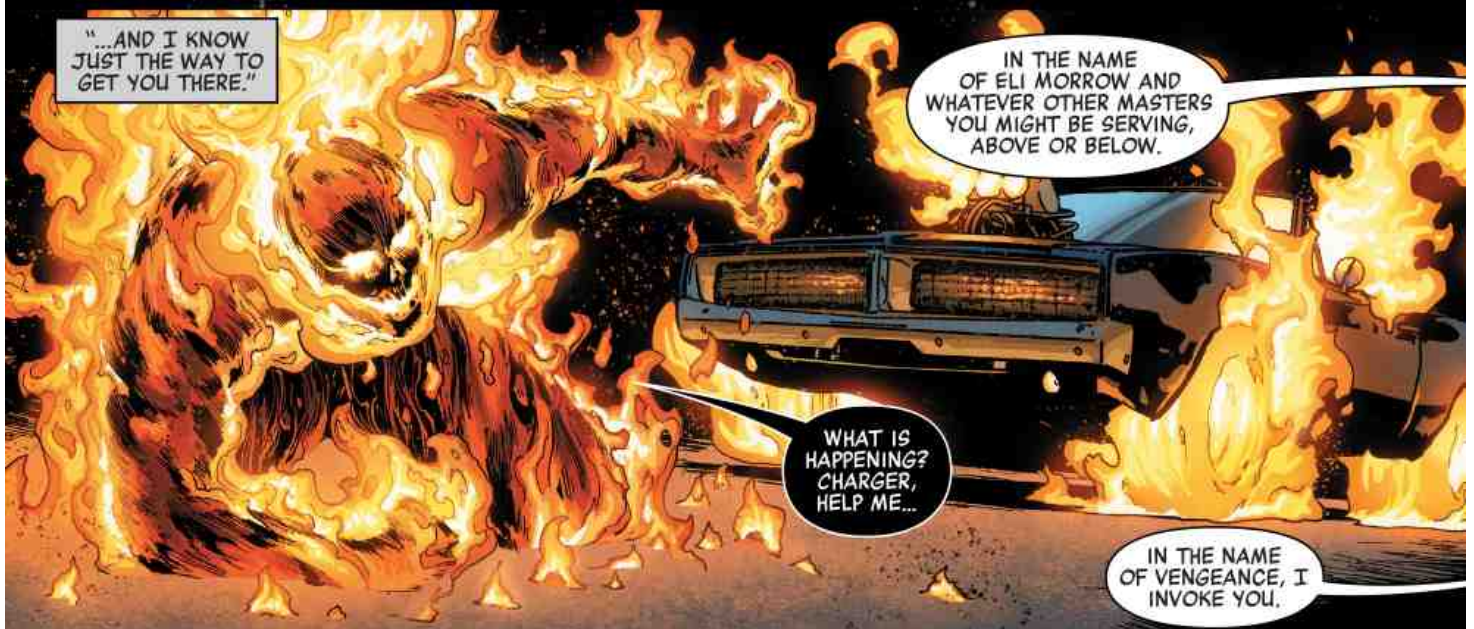
HAVEN'T YOU
BEEN LISTENING TO
ANYTHING I'VE SAID,
BLADE?



I'M THE NEW
LORD OF THE
VAMPIRES. AND
EITHER YOU'RE WITH
ME OR YOU
AREN'T.

LET ME SAVE
YOU THE TROUBLE
OF DECIDING,
DAYWALKER. YOU
AND YOUR FRIENDS
THE AVENGERS
CAN GO TO
HELL....

"...AND I KNOW
JUST THE WAY TO
GET YOU THERE."



IN THE NAME
OF ELI MORROW AND
WHATEVER OTHER MASTERS
YOU MIGHT BE SERVING,
ABOVE OR BELOW.

WHAT IS
HAPPENING?
CHARGER,
HELP ME...

IN THE NAME
OF VENGEANCE, I
INVOKE YOU.

R R GERH!

NOW GET
IN AND START
THE DAMN
CAR.



THE RUSSIAN/ UKRAINIAN BORDER.

I TELL YOU,
WHEN WE RE-FORMED
THE WINTER GUARD, I
DIDN'T IMAGINE...

...WE'D
ACTUALLY
WIND UP
STANDING
GUARD.

STAY SHARP,
BROTHER. IT'LL
BE DAWN SOON. BUT
URSA MAJOR AND THE
WIDOW JUST CAUGHT
ANOTHER PACK OF
VAMPIRES TRYING
TO SNEAK ACROSS
THE BORDER.

IF THAT CRAZY,
DRUNK BEAR GETS
HIMSELF BITTEN, THEN
WE'LL REALLY HAVE
SOME TROUBLE
ON OUR...

черт.

STOP RIGHT
THERE!

IDENTIFY
YOURSELF OR
I WILL OPEN
FIRE!

I MEAN
YOU NO
HARM.

HOLY
HELL...IS
THAT...

NICOLAI,
CALL FOR
BACKUP...

I WISH
TO SPEAK TO
SOMEONE IN A
POSITION OF
AUTHORITY IN
MOSCOW.

I AM A ROYAL
REFUGEE FLEEING
THE TROUBLES IN
ROMANIA, SEEKING
POLITICAL ASYLUM
IN RUSSIA.

MY NAME IS
VLAD TEPEȘ, PRINCE
OF WALLACHIA.

*COUNT
DRACULA OF
TRANSYLVANIA.*

PLEASE, I HAVE
LOST MY ANCESTRAL
HOME. I HAVE LOST
EVERYTHING.

I JUST
WISH TO KNOW
PEACE...

...IN THE
HUMBLE TWILIGHT
OF MY LIFE.



15 THE BATTLE FOR THE THRONE OF THE DAMNED



AVENGERS MOUNTAIN.

MY NAME IS
ROBERTO REYES. AND
I AM SCREAMING.

RRRRRRGGGH!!!

SCREAMING AND
SCREAMING AND
SCREAMING.

THIS
HAS BEEN FUN,
BLADE, BUT I'LL BE
LEAVING NOW. ONLY
QUESTION
IS...

GUUGH!

...AM I
KILLING YOU BEFORE
I GO?

SO MUCH SCREAMING IT FEELS
LIKE MY THROAT IS ON FIRE.

STAND DOWN,
COLONEL! OR I'LL
MAKE YOU WISH TO
HELL YOU--

BUT FOR SOME
REASON, NO ONE
CAN HEAR ME.

UUUGH!



THE DOG'S WORDS MADE ME SCREAM.
MADE ME LOSE MYSELF IN FIRE.

DO WE
HAVE TIME FOR ME TO *EAT*
THIS ONE? HE SMELLS LIKE
PHARMACEUTICALS.

YOU TELL
ME, SARGE! WHERE
THE HELL IS OUR
RIDE?

YOU'RE IN
AVENGERS MOUNTAIN!
YOU'RE GONNA NEED A LOT
MORE THAN A *DOG* TO
BREAK OUT OF--

LOSE MYSELF
EVEN MORE
THAN USUAL.

I'M NOT SURE WHERE I
AM RIGHT NOW. I JUST
KNOW IT *HURTS* LIKE HELL.

ROBBIE?!





IT FEELS LIKE
I'M BEING
BORN AGAIN.

TEARING MY
WAY OUT OF
MY MOTHER'S
BELLY.

SCREAMING AND
BAWLING AND
SPITTING UP
HELLFIRE.



AND GOD
HELP ME, THE
WORST PART
IS...

...EVEN
THROUGH ALL
THE AGONY...

...IT FEELS
SO DAMN
GOOD.

LATER.

THOR AND STARK
CHASED THE *HELL CHARGER*
FOR MILES BUT HAD TO STOP TO
SAVE A CRUISE LINER CAUGHT
IN THE FLAMES. IN OTHER
WORDS...

...WE'VE
LOST THE *GHOST
RIDER*.

OH,
ROBBIE, THAT
POOR KID.

THAT KID
IS A *SPIRIT OF
VENGEANCE*. POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO SET THE
WHOLE DAMN WORLD
ON FIRE.

YEAH, WELL,
SO ARE MOST
OF US AROUND
HERE.

WHILE IT
REPAIRS ITSELF,
THE MOUNTAIN IS ALSO
SCANNING THE GLOBE,
SEARCHING FOR ANY
TRACES OF HELLFIRE
ENERGY.

AND I'VE
DISPATCHED SOME OF
THE *AGENTS OF WAKANDA*
TO LOS ANGELES TO LOOK AFTER
ROBERTO'S YOUNGER BROTHER,
IN CASE THE RIDER SHOULD
RESURFACE THERE.

HE WON'T. THE
SHADOW COLONEL WILL
WANNA TURN HIS NEW TOY
LOOSE WHERE HE CAN DO THE
MOST DAMAGE TO THE
VAMPIRE LEADERSHIP.

WHICH MEANS
IF YOU WANNA
LOCATE YOUR
MISSING *GHOST
RIDER*...

...ALL WE'VE
GOTTA DO IS FIND
DRACULA.

ON THAT
FRONT, AT LEAST,
WE HAVE SOME
GOOD NEWS.

GOOD, BUT
STILL HIGHLY
ALARMING
NEWS.

**FEDERAL PENAL
COLONY NO. 9.**
SOL-ILETSK, RUSSIA.

"WHAT'S THE MATTER, PAL?
SURPRISED TO HAVE A *VISITOR*?"

"WE ARE DEEP WITHIN THE
BOWELS OF WHAT I CAN
ONLY IMAGINE IS THE MOST
FRIGHTFULLY SECURE PRISON
IN ALL OF RUSSIA.

"NO, I AM NOT SURPRISED TO
SEE THAT AN AVENGER HAS
WORMED HIS WAY INSIDE. I
AM ONLY SURPRISED..."

...THAT IT
IS YOU, *IRON
MAN*.

HEY,
THE BLACK
PANTHER ISN'T
THE ONLY AVENGER
WHO CAN GO
STEALTH.

I'VE ALSO
TAKEN CONTROL OF
THEIR SECURITY SYSTEMS,
SO WE SHOULD BE ABLE
TO SPEAK FREELY FOR
A MINUTE.

I HAVE
ALWAYS SPOKEN FREELY.
I SEE HIS LORDSHIP
T'CHALLA DID NOT HAVE
THE COURAGE IN HIS
VEINS TO FACE ME
HIMSELF.

ACTUALLY,
THE CHAIRMAN'S A
BIT BUSY RIGHT NOW
CLEANING UP YOUR MESS.
YOU KNOW, THE ONE
YOU RAN AND HID
FROM.

SO THE
MAN IN THE FULL
SUIT OF METAL ARMOR
WISHES TO ACCUSE *ME*
OF HIDING? HOW
VERY RICH.

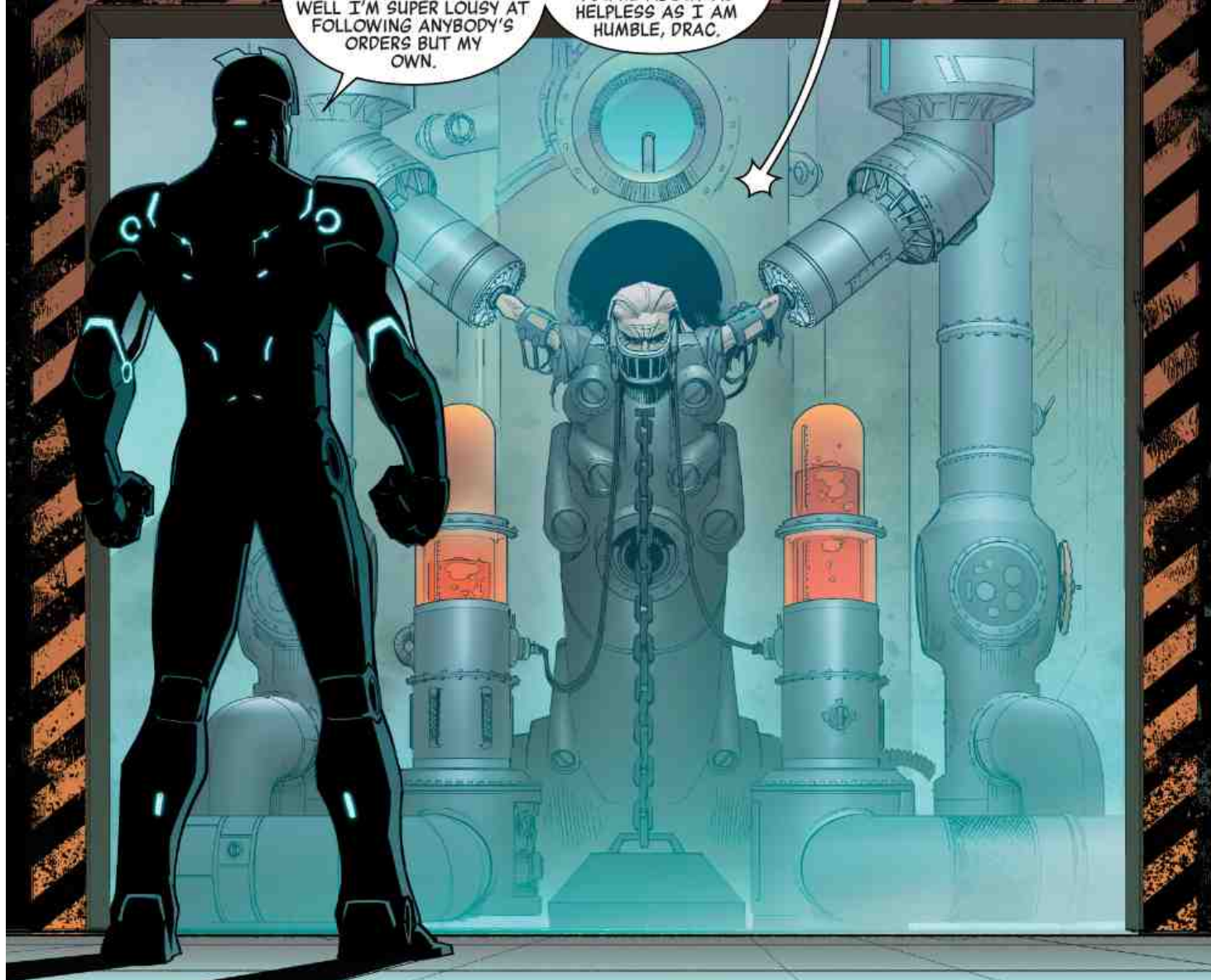
KNOW THAT
I NEVER WORE A
MASK WHEN *I* CAME
TO *ASSASSINATE*
SOMEONE.

NOT EVEN
TO MURDER A
HELPLESS **OLD**
MAN.

I'M
PRETTY SURE
THE PANTHER SAID
SPECIFICALLY **NOT** TO
KILL YOU. BUT HE ALSO
SENT **ME**, KNOWING FULL
WELL I'M SUPER LOUSY AT
FOLLOWING ANYBODY'S
ORDERS BUT MY
OWN.

AND
YOU, **HELPLESS**? I
DON'T GIVE A DAMN
HOW MANY CHAINS THE
RUSSIANS WRAP YOU IN,
YOU'RE ABOUT AS
HELPLESS AS I AM
HUMBLE, DRAC.

IF ONLY
THAT WERE THE
CASE.



THERE
WAS A TIME I
WOULD'VE ALREADY
SANK MY FANGS
THROUGH THAT FANCY
METAL OF YOURS, TONY
STARK, DEEP INTO THE
TENDER FLESH OF
YOUR POMPOUS
NECK.

BUT
THOSE DAYS,
I'M AFRAID, ARE
GONE. AS I HAVE
TOLD THE RUSSIANS,
I AM NO LONGER
THAT DRACULA.

I HAVE LOST
EVERYTHING EXCEPT
THE LAST FEW FADING
WISPS OF MY LIFE. AND
I WISH TO ENJOY
THOSE...IN PEACE
AND SOLITUDE.

HA!





HAA
HAA HA
HA!

YOU LAUGH AT
A DYING MAN. NOT
EVEN YOUR HORRIBLE
EXCUSE FOR A **FATHER**
WAS MONSTROUS
ENOUGH TO DO
THAT.



WHAT
DID YOU
SAY?!



OH, DID
YOU REALLY THINK
YOU WERE THE FIRST
STARK TO EVER
VISIT ME?

IT WAS
MANY YEARS AGO
IN MY CASTLE, BUT I CAN
STILL SEE **HOWARD STARK**
ON HIS KNEES, BLUBBERING
AND PLEADING.



OFFERING ME
ANYTHING I WANTED.
ANYTHING IN ALL THE
WORLD--EVEN THE PROMISING
YOUNG **CHILD** HE'D ADOPTED--
IF I WOULD BUT GRANT
HIS GREATEST
WISH.

AND GIVE
HIM A SIP OF
MY **BLOOD**.



IF I'VE LEARNED ANYTHING OVER THE
YEARS, IT'S THAT THE PROUDEST MAN
WILL DO THE MOST ABOMINABLE
THINGS FOR ETERNAL LIFE, ONCE HE
IS STARING DOWN THE BARREL
OF HIS OWN MORTALITY.

YOU THINK YOU
CAN RILE ME BY TALKING
MEAN ABOUT HOWARD?
BELIEVE ME, I'M WAY BETTER
AT BAD-MOUTHING MY DAD
THAN YOU COULD
EVER BE.

RILE
YOU?
NO.



I THINK YOU WILL BE IN
TEARS WHEN YOU LEAVE
THIS PLACE, STARK.

AND SOMEDAY,
ON YOUR DEATHBED,
NOT NEARLY AS MANY YEARS
FROM NOW AS YOU WOULD LIKE,
YOU WILL REMEMBER THIS
CONVERSATION AND WEEP
ALL THE MORE.

ON THAT DAY,
KNOW THAT **I'LL** BE
THE ONE WHO'S LAUGHING.
WAY DOWN IN THE
DEPTHS OF HELL.



WHAT ARE
YOU **AFTER** HERE,
YOU CRAZY OLD
BASTARD?

WHAT ARE
YOU OFFERING THE
RUSSIANS?



I AM A VERY OLD ARISTOCRAT WHO HAS SEEN AND HEARD MANY INTERESTING THINGS OVER THE CENTURIES.

HOWARD STARK WAS CERTAINLY NOT THE FIRST PERSON OF WEALTH AND POWER TO GROVEL BEFORE MY THRONE, LOOKING TO BARTER TREASURED SECRETS FOR ETERNAL LIFE.

BUT THAT THRONE IS GONE NOW, TURNED TO ASH ALONG WITH THE REST OF MY ANCESTRAL CASTLE.

IN THIS WEAKENED, FADING STATE YOU SEE BEFORE YOU, ALL I HAVE TO OFFER IS WISDOM. IN EXCHANGE FOR SANCTUARY.

AND WHAT IF I COULD OFFER YOU THAT?

HELP US END THIS VAMPIRE CIVIL WAR, AND THE AVENGERS WILL PROTECT YOU.

BEHIND BARS, OF COURSE. BUT IT'S A BETTER DEAL THAN WHATEVER MOSCOW IS OFFERING.

YOU HAVE TO KNOW THEY'LL ONLY BLEED YOU DRY AND BETRAY YOU JUST AS SOON AS YOU'RE NO LONGER USEFUL.

THE AVENGERS? PROTECT ME? YOU MEAN THE GROUP THAT JUST WELCOMED THE WORLD'S DEADLIEST VAMPIRE HUNTER INTO ITS RANKS? DO YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL, STARK?

I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE. I COULDN'T SAY YET.

ALSO, HEY, "TAKE YOU," THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA. I COULD ALSO JUST DO THAT, WHETHER YOU REALLY WANNA COME WITH ME OR NOT.

NO, YOU WON'T BE DOING THAT.

OH, AND WHY WON'T I, COUNT CHOCULA?

BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO BE PREOCCUPIED.

YEAH? WITH WHAT?



SUPPRESSING THE RIOT.

CLANGA
CLANGA
CLANGA



THIS IS CRIMSON DYNAMO IN CELL BLOCK THREE! WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED?!

THE WHOLE PRISON IS LOSING ITS MIND! THE INMATES ARE RABID ANIMALS! SOMEBODY TELL ME THEY'VE GOT EYES ON DRACULA!



HE NEVER LEFT HIS CELL, BUT THIS IS DEFINITELY HIS DOING.

STARK?! YOU SONUVA... YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR BREAKING AND--



YOU REALLY WANT ME BEHIND BARS RIGHT NOW, DMITRI?

DAMN IT! I TOLD MOSCOW WE SHOULD'VE PUT A STAKE THROUGH THAT MONSTER'S HEART! HOW IS HE DOING THIS?! IS THIS HIS PLAN TO ESCAPE?!

HE'S DRACULA, THAT'S HOW HE'S DOING IT. AND NO, DMITRI, THE SCARIEST PART IS...



"...I DON'T THINK HE WANTS TO GO ANYWHERE."

MADRIPOOR.

I STILL HEAR
SCREAMS. ONLY
NOW IT'S WORSE
THAN BEFORE.

BECAUSE NOW I'M
NOT THE ONE WHO'S
SCREAMING.

WE ARE
PEACEFUL VAMPIRES.
WE ONLY FEED ON THE
BLOOD OF THE WICKED.
PLEASE...SHOW
MERCY.

SQUEAK

FABOOOM

DINING ROOM
IS CLEAR. AS USUAL,
MY LITTLE BEAUTIES
WILL HOLD THE
PERIMETER.

THE RAT
BOMBER IS ALWAYS THE
FIRST WAVE OF ATTACK.
AND WHAT HIS RODENT-
DELIVERED SUNBURST
GRENADES DON'T
OBLITERATE...



...THE SECOND WAVE DEALS WITH MOST EFFICIENTLY.

SNOWSNAKE
AND THE **CARPATHIAN** HAVE BEEN KILLING THINGS FOR ABOUT AS LONG AS THERE'VE BEEN THINGS AROUND TO KILL.

IF I KEEP THEM FED, THEY GENERALLY AGREE NOT TO TRY AND KILL ME.



THESE ONES FOUGHT HARD TO PROTECT THEIR **SAFE ROOM** AT THE END OF THE HALL. MUST BE SOMETHING RATHER IMPORTANT INSIDE.

WE FIGURED YOU'D WISH TO DO THE HONORS.

YOU FIGURE RIGHT, **LADY CROMWELL**.



THE **BARONESS BLOOD** IS HERE BECAUSE SHE THINKS WE'RE GOING TO HELP HER BRING ABOUT THE **FOURTH REICH**.

SARGE IS THE ONLY ONE I REALLY TRUST. AS MUCH AS YOU CAN TRUST A GIANT, MURDEROUS **HELLHOUND**.

AND THEN THERE IS MY LITTLE TRAVELING COMPANION HERE...

TIME TO LOCK AND LOAD, **BOY-THING**.





PROVE YOU'RE
THE **MONSTER** I NEED
YOU TO BE.

GET TO
BURNING, GHOST
RIDER.

NOW EVERYTHING IS
QUIET. SO QUIET I
CAN HEAR MY OWN
SKULL SIZZLING.

THERE IS SO MUCH FIRE
INSIDE ME RIGHT NOW.
BURNING ME UP FROM
THE INSIDE.

SO MUCH
THAT I HAVE
NO CHOICE...



...BUT
TO LET
IT OUT.



PRISONERS ARE BACK IN THEIR CELLS, AND YOU WERE RIGHT, STARK.

THROUGH THE WHOLE RIOT, DRACULA NEVER ONCE TRIED TO BREAK FREE.



SO WHY DID HE DO IT?

MAYBE JUST TO SHOW US THAT HE COULD.

OR TO PROVE HE'S BEING TRUTHFUL ABOUT WHAT HE SAYS. THAT HE REALLY DOESN'T WANT TO FIGHT ANYMORE.

NO OFFENSE, WINTER GUARD, BUT YOUR MASTERS IN MOSCOW ARE A BUNCH OF BORSCHT-GURGLING IDIOTS IF THEY BELIEVE THAT.



SPEAKING OF IDIOTS--YOU KNOW WE HAVE TO ARREST YOU NOW, AVENGER.

I KNOW YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE TO TRY. BUT DON'T YOU PEOPLE HAVE ENOUGH ENEMIES AS IT IS?

STARK...



BE GLAD THE BEAR OR THE WIDOW AREN'T HERE, OR THAT WOULD JUST BE THE BEGINNING.

GET OUT. AND LEAVE OUR BUSINESS TO US--OR DRACULA WILL GAIN A NEW CELLMATE.



HA.

NO, HOWARD, I DON'T WANT YOUR BOY.

I DON'T TAKE HAND-ME-DOWNS FROM STARKS.



THIS IS STARK TO THE PANTHER. WE'RE NOT GETTING DRACULA WITHOUT GOING TO WAR WITH THE WINTER GUARD. FULL REPORT WHEN I GET BACK.

COPY THAT, TONY. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU SOUND AS IF YOU'VE BEEN...

STARK OUT.





I AM THE GHOST
RIDER. I AM A
MONSTER FROM
HELL.



BUT EVEN
MONSTERS HAVE
THEIR LIMITS.

YOU
MISSED,
RIDER.



PERHAPS
I DIDN'T
MAKE MYSELF
CLEAR.

THE CHILDREN.
I NEED YOU TO
WIPE OUT THIS ENTIRE
PACK OF VAMPIRE
CHILDREN.

NOW.



NO.



HEH.
YOU CAN FIGHT
AGAINST THE BIT
ALL YOU LIKE, LITTLE
PONY, BUT IT ISN'T
GOING ANYWHERE.
AND NEITHER ARE
YOU.



ZARATHOS
ZAKKARUM
INVICTUS.



AAAAARRRRGGH!!!

YES, YOU
THINK ABOUT THAT
FOR A MOMENT WHILE
I FINISH THIS
MYSELF.



THOOM



HANDS
IN THE AIR,
COLONEL!

CHANGE OF PLANS, RIDER. YOU
DON'T WANT TO MURDER A BUNCH
OF VAMPIRE CHILDREN? FINE.
MEPHISTOPHELES
VINDICTA!

RRRRRRGGGH!!!



16 A FISTFUL OF BLOOD



WHEN I FIRST STARTED
TURNING INTO THE
GHOST RIDER, IT WAS
LIKE HE WAS A WHOLE
DIFFERENT PERSON.

HONK HONK

C'MON!
MOVE IT!

I COULDN'T CONTROL HIS
ACTIONS. COULDN'T SPIT
MY WORDS OUT THROUGH
HIS FLAMING MOUTH.

WHEN THE RIDER CAME,
IT WAS LIKE...ROBBIE
REYES WENT AWAY.

WENT AWAY TO A VERY DARK
AND LONELY PLACE, A PLACE
I SOON CAME TO REALIZE...
WAS SOME KIND OF *HELL*.

OR AT LEAST
MY VERSION
OF IT.

LET'S GO!
SOMEBODY!
ANYBODY!

I WAS BORN AND
RAISED IN
LOS ANGELES.
SO FOR ME...

...HELL IS A
FREEWAY.

GOING
NOWHERE
AT ALL.

MOVE!
PLEASE
MOVE!

WHICH IS
EXACTLY
WHERE I'M
HEADED.



BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE
ENDED UP TRAPPED HERE. I'D
GOTTEN TO WHERE I COULD
CONTROL THE RIDER MORE.

THOUGHT I WAS
ACTUALLY STARTING
TO GET A HANDLE ON
WHATEVER THIS THING
IS I'VE BECOME.

OH GOD.
OH THOR. OH
ANYBODY. PLEASE
GET ME OUT
OF HERE.



BUT THEN A BIG TALKING DOG
AND HIS VAMPIRE FRIENDS
WALKED INTO MY LIFE, SPOUTING
MAGICAL GIBBERISH THAT MADE
ME LOSE WHATEVER MIND I'VE
GOT LEFT IN THIS BURNED-OUT
SKULL I CALL A HEAD.

THE DEVIL.
ANY DEVIL.
WHOEVER THE HELL
IS LISTENING.



SO NOW HERE I AM AGAIN, BACK
ON HELL'S GRIDLOCKED HIGHWAY.
WHILE THE RIDER RUNS FREE,
DOING GOD KNOWS WHAT.

A FEW WEEKS AGO, I
WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO
PUNCH OUT A CELESTIAL.

VR000000000M

BETTER BE
CAREFUL SAYING
STUFF LIKE THAT
DOWN HERE,
BOY.



NOW I'M JUST SOME
WEAK LITTLE KID
WHO'S IN WAY OVER
HIS STUPID HEAD.

YOU DON'T
WANNA GO
MAKING ANY DEALS
YOU CAN'T
LIVE UP TO.

WHAT...?
WHAT THE HELL
ARE YOU DOING
HERE?

YEAH, I'M DEFINITELY
THE **WEAKEST** AVENGER
YOU'VE EVER SEEN.

NO DOUBT
ABOUT IT.

GHHHK. HIS
ARMS...ARE NOTHING
BUT BONE. **HOW** CAN
HE BE THIS
STRONG?!

DON'T
FORGET...

MADRIPOOR.

THE
FIRE.

HRRRRGGH!!!

I'LL
TAKE URU
AND THUNDER
OVER BONE AND
FLAME ANY
DAY!

THOR,
STOP!



HE DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT HE'S
DOING! ROBBIE
ISN'T HIMSELF!

THE BOY
IS A *SPIRIT OF
VENGEANCE*. I FEAR
HE IS MORE HIMSELF
THAN EVER
BEFORE.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT.
HE'S A GOOD KID. WE
HAVE TO TAKE HIM
DOWN WITHOUT
HURTING HIM!



GAAGH!

THEN WE ARE
HALFWAY THERE
FOR WE *DEFINITELY*
HAVE NOT HURT
HIM.



ROBBIE, FIGHT
THIS! YOU'RE NOT
A MONSTER! DON'T
MAKE US HAVE TO
TREAT YOU LIKE
ONE!

HE CANNOT
HEAR YOU, LADY CAROL.
ROBERTO IS DEEP IN THE
THROES OF *WARRIOR
MADNESS*.

AND AS I
KNOW ALL TOO WELL,
THERE IS ONLY ONE
CURE FOR SUCH A STATE.



THE
SHOCK OF
PAIN!



--AGAINST THESE MONSTERS WHO WANT TO MAKE YOU ONE OF THEM!

WHAT I WANT, HERR ROGERS, IS TO TEAR YOUR WRETCHED THROAT OUT!

NOT NOW, BARONESS. THE VAMPIRE KIDS HAVE FLED. TELL THE OTHERS TO BE READY TO MIST OUT OF HERE BEFORE THIS ENTIRE BUILDING BLOWS.

BLOWS? SHALL I FETCH THE RAT BOMBER?

NO. IT'S ALREADY BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.

RRGH!!!



GAAARRGGH!!!

SARGE!



HEY, COLONEL. I JUST SHOT YOUR DOG. STILL FEEL LIKE RUNNING AWAY?

I THINK YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HAD BETTER START RUNNING, BLADE.



BECAUSE MY DOG SHOOTS BACK.

AH, %E@# HELL!!!



COLONEL, I'M HAVING
A PROBLEM RAISING
SNOWSNAKE AND THE
CARPATHIAN.

YOU KNOW THOSE TWO.
NOT EXACTLY THE MOUTHY
TYPES. EXCEPT WHEN IT
COMES TO SINKING
FANGS INTO
SOMETHING.

I'M SURE
WHATEVER
THEY'RE
DEALING
WITH...



"...IT WILL BE A **SMEAR** ON
THEIR CHINS BEFORE TOO LONG."

HRRPH.
PANTHER
WASTE TIME.

I UNDERSTAND
YOUR DESIRE FOR
FREEDOM FROM THE YOKE
OF DRACULA, BUT WAR
IS NOT THE ANSWER
FOR YOUR PEOPLE!



DON'T THINK THESE TWO MAKE
TALK MUCH GOOD. BET CAN'T
FIGHT GOOD EITHER!

SKRREEEE!

GGRRRRGGGH!!!



ROBBIE!
FIGHT THIS!
YOU'RE NOT A
MONSTER!
YOU'RE A--

HRRRGGH!



"...IN THE FIRE
OF VENGEANCE."



SO. HERE WE
ARE. THIS IS THE
MEETING YOU REQUESTED,
COUNT DRACULA. YOU
HAVE PROPOSALS YOU
WISH TO MAKE?

AN UNDISCLOSED FACILITY SOMEWHERE IN RUSSIA.

MAKE
THEM NOW.

I DID NOT
REQUEST A
MEETING WITH THE
RED WIDOW.

I AM THE LORD
OF TRANSYLVANIA.
I WILL ONLY SPEAK
WITH THE MAN IN
CHARGE.



HRRSSSS!!!

WERE
THE LORD
OF TRANSYLVANIA.
YOU DEAL
WITH ME.

THESE VAMPIRE
FOLLOWERS OF
YOURS ALSO CAME
TO RUSSIA SEEKING
ASYLUM. I AM GIVING
IT TO THEM. TELL
ME, OLD MAN...

...WHY DO
YOU DESERVE
ANYTHING
DIFFERENT?

HRRREEEHII!!!

BECAUSE
THE CONTENTS
OF MY HEAD ARE
WORTH FAR MORE
INTACT THAN
*SPILLED UPON
THE FLOOR*.

PROVE
IT.





WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO BEGIN?

I HAVE SENATORS AND LORDS IN MY POCKET. SULTANS AND BISHOPS. PEOPLE OF GREAT WEALTH AND POWER ARE ALWAYS THE QUICKEST TO SELL THEIR SOULS FOR A CHANCE AT ETERNAL LIFE.

PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW THE ONES WITHIN YOUR OWN GOVERNMENT WHO CLAIM ALLEGIANCE TO ME?

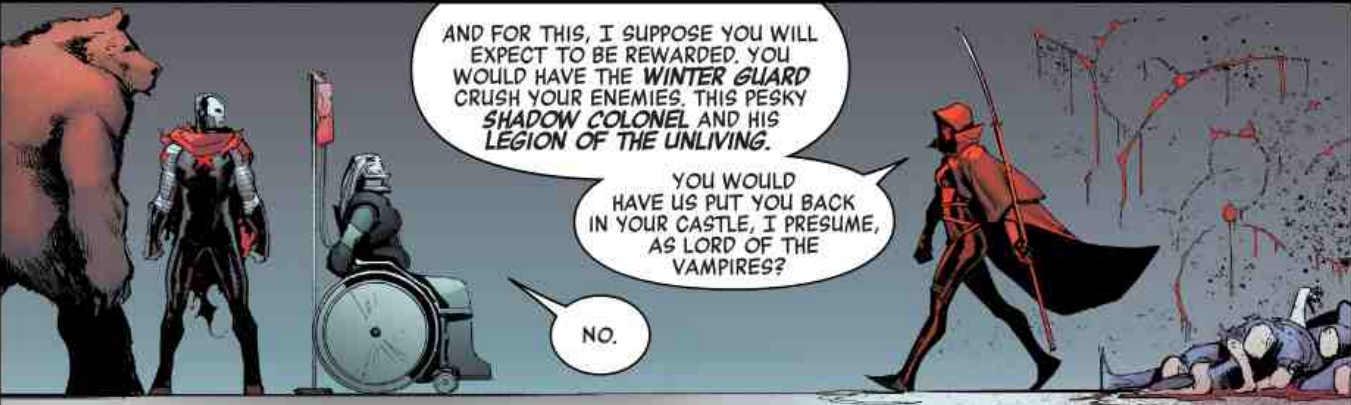


WE ALREADY HAVE SPYMASTERS. WHAT ELSE?

I KNOW WHAT YOUR MASTER *TRULY* DESIRES. I CAN GIVE YOU THAT AS WELL.



I CAN GIVE YOU THE *AVENGERS*.



AND FOR THIS, I SUPPOSE YOU WILL EXPECT TO BE REWARDED. YOU WOULD HAVE THE *WINTER GUARD* CRUSH YOUR ENEMIES. THIS PESKY *SHADOW COLONEL* AND HIS *LEGION OF THE UNLIVING*.

YOU WOULD HAVE US PUT YOU BACK IN YOUR CASTLE, I PRESUME, AS LORD OF THE VAMPIRES?

NO.



I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THAT THRONE ANYMORE. I CARRIED AN ENTIRE PEOPLE ON MY BACK FOR OVER A CENTURY. AND IN THE END, ALL IT LEFT ME... WAS TIRED.



I ONLY WANT A PLACE FOR MYSELF. SOMEWHERE I'LL BE LEFT ALONE. FOR HOWEVER MANY DAYS I HAVE LEFT.





THIS IS T'CHALLA. THE VAMPIRES ARE TURNING TO MIST AND ESCAPING. BLADE, WHAT'S YOUR STATUS?



THE DOG ATE MY SWORD!

HA HA HA!

AND MY GUN!

NOW IT'S STANDING ON THE CEILING, LAUGHING AT ME!

MY STATUS IS I HATE THIS DOG!



COPY THAT. SENDING THE HULK.

YOU AND YOUR HULK CAN GO TO HELL, PANTHER-MAN! THE DAY I NEED HELP AGAINST A DOG...

...FEEL FREE TO PUT ME DOWN LIKE ONE!

GLADLY, BLADE. WE'LL HANG YOUR CARCASS ON THE BANKS OF PARADISE, SO YOU CAN LOOK UPON THE PROMISED LAND YOU DENIED YOURSELF.



PROMISED LAND? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU BARKING ABOUT?

HEH. THE KINGDOM.



"THE KINGDOM AND THE BLOODY GLORY."

HRRRRRRGGGH!

AFTER THIS SINNER'S FACE TURNS TO FIRE, ALL OF YOU WILL JOIN HER IN PENANCE.

I'M GONNA TAKE... A HARD PASS ON ALL THAT.



IMPOSSIBLE.
NO MORTAL CAN
WITHSTAND THE
PENANCE STARE.

WHOEVER
SAID... I WAS
MORTAL? AND
BELIEVE ME...



...I'VE DONE
PENANCE MY
WHOLE DAMN
LIFE!

AND
I'M SICK AND
TIRED OF BEING
PUNISHED FOR
EXISTING!

GRRRGGGH!!!



CAROL...

NEVER MIND
ME, STEVE.
HELP ROBBIE.

YOU THINK
YOU KNOW
PUNISHMENT? YOU
DON'T. BUT THE
SPIRIT WILL
SHOW YOU.

LIKE I
PUNISHED THE
PHARISEES AND
THE HARLOTS OF SALEM/
THE WENDIGO AND THE
LUFTWAFFE! BLACKHEART
AND THE ANGEL
ZADKIEL!

NOW IT'S YOUR
TURN, AVENGERS.
AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE
THE STARE... YOU CAN
TRY THE **PENANCE
BOMB!**

DAMMIT, HE'S
GONNA BLOW!
THOR, TAKE
HIM DOWN!



GAAARRGGH!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT'S HAPPENING! I
FEEL LIKE I'M ABOUT
TO EXPLODE!

THAT'S BECAUSE
YOU ARE, ROBBIE.
YOU WANT A WORD
OF ADVICE FROM
SOMEBODY WHO
KNOWS?

"LET THE AVENGERS
KILL YOU. IT'LL BE
EASIER THAT WAY."

LAST CHANCE,
ROBERTO! END
THIS MADNESS! OR
I SEND YOU TO HELL
WITH YOUR OWN CAR!

THE TRUNK!
IT'S A PORTAL
TO HELL! PUT
HIM IN THE...

SHUNK

UGGGH.

SPTFW
THAT OUGHTA
DO IT.

BLADE?
WHAT THE
HELL DID YOU
JUST DO?

I'M A
VAMPIRE. SORTA.
I DID WHAT
VAMPIRES DO.

THE RIDER
HAD A SICKNESS
IN HIS VEINS. SO I...
SUCKED IT OUT.

ANYBODY WHO
MAKES A JOKE
GETS NUNCHUCKED
TO DEATH.



I HAD TO LET THE DOG GO, THOUGH.

YES, THE COLONEL AND HIS LEGION HAVE ESCAPED US.

BUT MY AGENTS HAVE TAKEN THE VAMPIRE CHILDREN INTO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY.

WE WILL BE BRINGING THEM TO WAKANDA FOR TREATMENT.

RIGHT. I GOT ALL THE "TREATMENT" THEY NEED RIGHT HERE.



THE COLONEL'S LIST OF TARGETS HAS BEEN ALL BUT ELIMINATED. HE WILL BE FOCUSING SOLELY ON DRACULA NOW.

WE'RE FIGHTING VAMPIRES WHO KILL OTHER VAMPIRES, ALONGSIDE A VAMPIRE WHO KILLS OTHER VAMPIRES.

I'M STILL NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR ON WHY WE'RE EVEN BOTHERING TO GET INVOLVED IN THIS.

BECAUSE THEY WON'T STOP WITH KILLING EACH OTHER.

THEY'LL KEEP GOING UNTIL EVERY ONE OF YOU IS DEAD.



ROBBIE? YOU ALL RIGHT?

CAP? IT WASN'T ME, I SWEAR. I WOULDN'T...

I WOULDN'T HURT YOU GUYS... I...



I'M SORRY, EVERYONE. I'M SO SORRY.

IT'S OKAY.

WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE.



THEY'RE
GONNA SEND
ME HOME.



DON'T YOU
THINK THAT'S A
GOOD IDEA?

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO THINK
ANYMORE.

WHAT DID
THEY DO TO ME,
THOSE VAMPIRES?
HOW DID THEY MAKE
ME INTO SUCH A
MONSTER?

HEH.

WHAT THE
HELL'S SO
FUNNY?



RIDER NEVER
PICKS THE
GENIUSES FOR
HOSTS, DOES
IT?

WHAT'S
THAT SUPPOSED
TO MEAN?



YOU GOT
SOMEONE YOU
CARE ABOUT, KID?
SOMEONE NORMAL?
SOMEONE STILL
BREATHING?

YEAH.
I DO.



THEN **GET
OUT** NOW, NO
MATTER WHAT
IT TAKES.

IF
YOU WANT
'EM TO STAY
THAT WAY.

FEDERAL PENAL COLONY NO. 9.
SOL-ILETSK, RUSSIA.

THE RIOTERS ARE
ALL BACK IN THEIR
CELLS, AND DRACULA'S
IN THE RED WIDOW'S
CUSTODY.

SO YOUR PRISON
SHOULD BE BACK TO
NORMAL, AND THE WINTER
GUARD SHOULD BE GETTING
BACK TO MOSCOW.

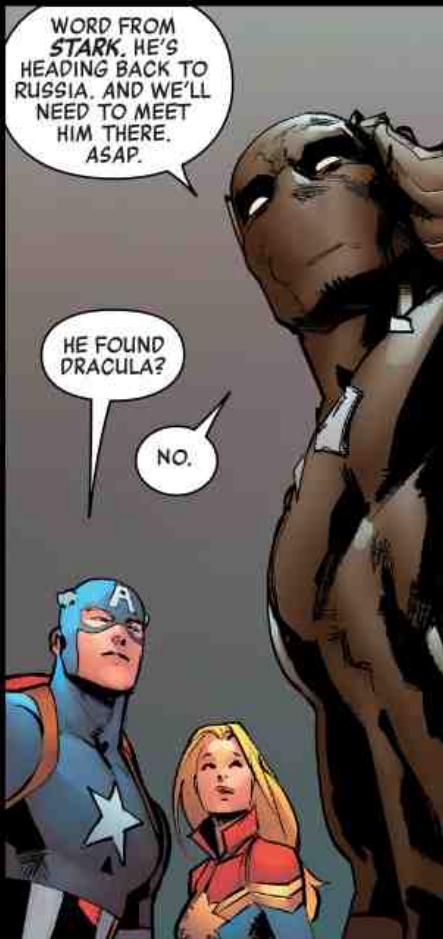
RIGHT, WELL,
NORMAL IN THIS
PLACE STILL MEANS
WE'RE SURROUNDED
BY THE MOST VICIOUS
MURDERERS RUSSIA'S
EVER SEEN.

BUT WE'LL
TAKE IT FROM HERE,
CRIMSON DYNAMO.
DON'T WORRY, AFTER
THE BEATING WE PUT
ON THESE GUYS
TODAY...

...I DON'T
THINK ANYBODY
WILL BE STIRRING
TONIGHT.

WINTER GUARD
JUST FLEW AWAY.
AND THE RATS ARE IN
POSITION. WE CAN TAKE
THE PRISON ANY TIME
WE WANT, COLONEL.

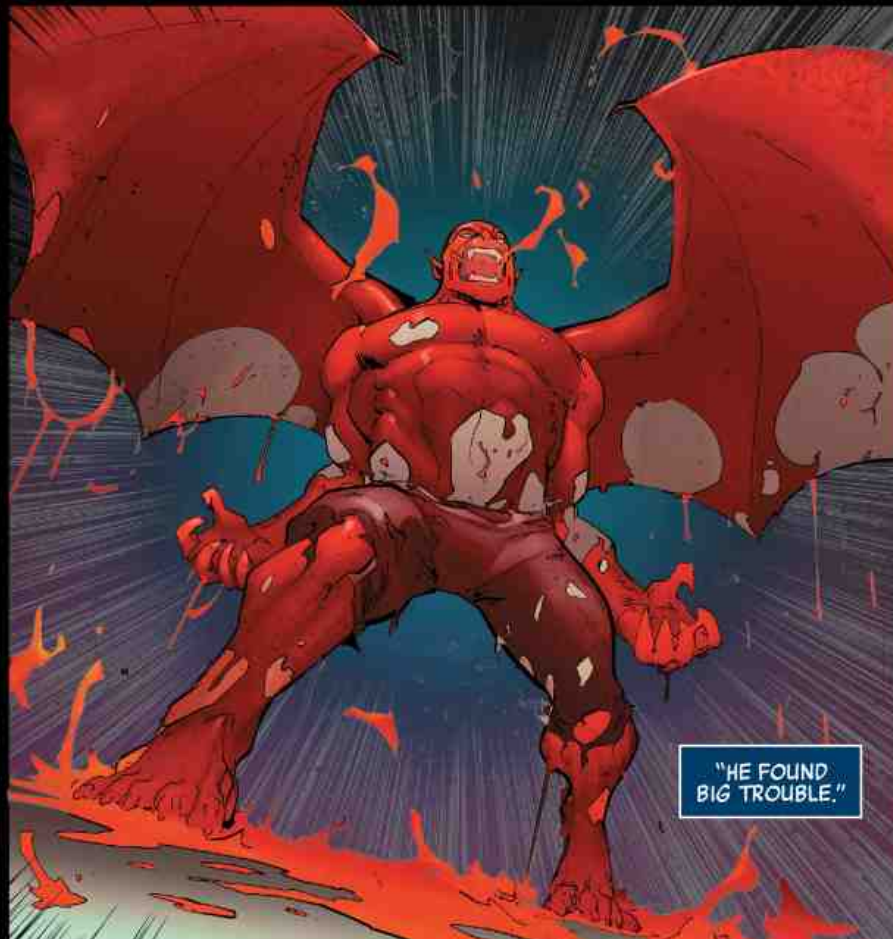




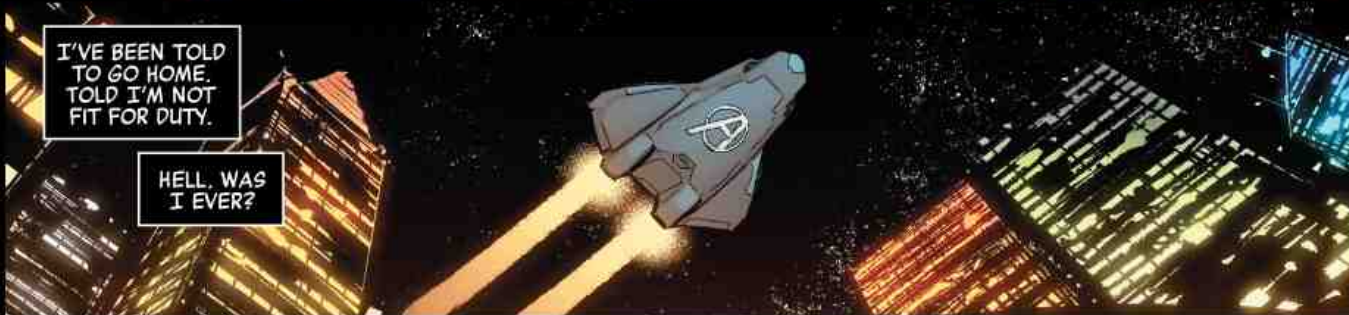
WORD FROM STARK. HE'S HEADING BACK TO RUSSIA, AND WE'LL NEED TO MEET HIM THERE. ASAP.

HE FOUND DRACULA?

NO.



"HE FOUND BIG TROUBLE."



I'VE BEEN TOLD TO GO HOME. TOLD I'M NOT FIT FOR DUTY.

HELL. WAS I EVER?



AND I DIDN'T EVEN TELL 'EM WHO I SAW WHEN I WAS OUT OF IT. WHEN I WAS TRAPPED ON THE BURNED-OUT HELL HIGHWAY.

MAYBE IT WAS ALL IN MY HEAD. I KEEP TELLING MYSELF. BUT EITHER WAY, IT SCARES ME TO DEATH.

WORST PART WAS HOW HE *SMILED* WHEN HE KNEW I WAS LEAVING.



I'M REGAINING CONTROL! I CAN FINALLY GET OFF THIS DAMNED HIGHWAY!

HEH. SURE YOU ARE. FOR NOW.

BUT BELIEVE ME, KID...

YOU'LL BE
BACK.

AND THE
KING OF HELL
WILL BE HERE
WAITING.

AND NEXT
TIME I SEE YOU,
GHOST RIDER...
YOU AND ME...

...WE'RE
GONNA DO A
BIT MORE THAN
JUST TALK.

WE'RE
GONNA HAVE
US A LITTLE
RIDE.

JOHNNY BLAZE
WAS A GOOD
GUY ONCE.

HE WAS THE
GREATEST
GHOST RIDER WHO
EVER LIVED.

NOW HE'S SOMETHING
THAT CHILLS MY BONES.
MAYBE BECAUSE I KNOW...

...I'M ALREADY MORE
OF A MONSTER THAN
HE EVER WAS.



17 THE KINGDOM OF THE VAMPIRES



AFTER I'M GONE, HOW
DO YOU SUPPOSE I'LL
BE REMEMBERED?

THAT...
IS ALL I
KNOW.

EVERY DARK
SECRET OF
THE LAST 500
YEARS.

ON THE
COFFINS OF
MY CHILDREN,
I SWEAR.

AS A SAVIOR? A REDEEMER?
AN INSPIRING LEADER
WHO UNITED HIS PEOPLE?

**LOCATION:
CLASSIFIED.**

NOW PLEASE...
TAKE ME AWAY
FROM THIS PLACE.
I WISH TO GO
SOMEWHERE...
ANYWHERE...

...WITH NO
MORE BLOOD.
PLEASE.

NO. I
THINK
NOT.

MOSCOW
ACCEPTS YOUR
PROPOSAL, LORD
DRACULA.

TAKE HIM
AWAY.

MUST SAY...I'M
NOT IMPRESSED.

I'LL ONLY BE REMEMBERED FOR
THE BLOOD THAT WAS SPILLED IN
MY NAME. ENOUGH BLOOD FOR A
THOUSAND LIFETIMES.

WHICH IS HOW
LONG IT FEELS LIKE
I'VE LIVED.

YOU DISAPPROVE
OF MY METHODS,
URSA MAJOR?

NAH. YOUR METHODS ARE JUST
FINE, RED WIDOW. I MEAN,
A BIT CLEAN FOR MY
TASTES, BUT JUST
FINE.

IT'S *DRACULA*.
WHAT A CRUSHING
DISAPPOINTMENT THE BIG
BAD LORD OF THE
BLOODSUCKERS TURNED
OUT TO BE.

THIS IS FAR FROM THE
FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN
STRIPPED OF MY POWER.
MY CROWN. ON OCCASION,
I'VE EVEN LOST THE
HEAD IT SAT UPON.

I MEAN, YOU
HEAR ALL THE SCARY
STORIES. ABOUT WHAT
A MONSTER HE USED
TO BE.

TO SEE HIM
REDUCED TO SUCH
A BLUBBERING, PATHETIC
MESS... I DON'T KNOW.
IT MAKES YOU
THINK.

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN
A CYCLE TO THESE THINGS.
NEW CHALLENGERS ARISE AND
ULTIMATELY FALL. AND I
WOULD ALWAYS RE-EMERGE,
STRONGER FOR IT.

EVEN
MONSTERS
GET OLD, I
GUESS.

AND WHERE
DOES ONE PUT AN
OLD MONSTER SO THEY
NEED NEVER LOOK
UPON THEM AGAIN?

YOU WANT
ME TO EAT
HIM?

NO.
MOSCOW
WANTS HIM
ALIVE.

THAT CYCLE BEGAN
IN 1459, WHEN A
WITCH SANK HER FANGS
INTO MY NECK. IT ENDS
HERE TODAY. IN A
RUSSIAN BASEMENT.

WITH WHIMPERS
AND RUIN.

IN CASE HE
SHOULD EVER
PROVE USEFUL
AGAIN.

WELL,
I DOUBT
THAT.

THE COUNT
WISHES TO GO
SOMEWHERE QUIET
AND PEACEFUL. TELL
ME, URSA MAJOR...
WHAT IS THE QUIETEST
PLACE YOU CAN THINK
OF WITHIN OUR
MOTHERLAND?

WELL...
THERE'S ONE
THAT COMES
RIGHT TO
MIND.

ALL RIGHT,
GET GOING.

I WAS BORN AND MURDERED
AND REBORN MANY TIMES IN
MY ANCESTRAL HOMELAND
OF TRANSYLVANIA.

BUT THAT LAND WAS TAKEN
FROM ME, ONE PIECE AT A
TIME, BY CONQUERORS AND
KINGS AND, WORST OF ALL,
REAL ESTATE MOGULS.

THERE IS NO GOING
BACK TO THE OLD
COUNTRY. MY CASTLE
HAS BEEN PUT TO THE
TORCH. MY PEOPLE ALL
BUT ANNIHILATED.
THERE IS NO PLACE
LEFT FOR ME NOW.

WELCOME
TO YOUR NEW HOME,
COUNT. DON'T LET THE
LOOKS OF IT FOOL YOU.
IT'S EXACTLY WHAT
YOU ASKED FOR.

EXCEPT WHAT I
MAKE FOR MYSELF.

HERE IN THE
SHADOWS.

NICE AND
QUIET. HA!

**UKRAINE,
THE CHERNOBYL
EXCLUSION ZONE.**

РАДІОАКТИВНІСТЬ
ЧОРНОБІЛЬ

RUSSIA.

«THIS IS THE
SOL-ILETSK PENAL
COLONY, ON HIGH ALERT!
THE PRISONERS ARE OUT
OF THEIR CELLS! AND
THEY'VE ALL BEEN
CHANGED INTO...?»

«...GOD
HELP US, INTO
VAMPIRES!?»

*TRANSLATED
FROM RUSSIAN.

«THEY TORE
THROUGH THE BARS!
THEY'RE TEARING
THROUGH EVERYTHING!
INCLUDING US!?»

«BULLETS
DON'T STOP THEM!
NOTHING STOPS
THEM!?»

«WE CANNOT
HOLD THE PRISON!
NOT WITHOUT
BACKUP!?»

«LISTEN TO
ME! YOU BOYS CAN
STILL WAKE UP TOMORROW,
BACK IN YOUR CELLS. OR
IN THE PRISON
INFIRMARY.?»

«WHERE ARE
OUR COUNTRY'S
GREATEST
HEROES??»

«OR YOU
CAN NOT WAKE
UP AT ALL. CHOICE
IS YOURS.?»

COME, YE
SUCKERS OF
BLOOD! COME
TASTE A
MOUTHFUL OF
THUNDER!



"WHERE IS THE WINTER GUARD?!"

RRRRRGH!

GLUGH!



THE CARPATHIAN WANTS TO KNOW IF HE SHOULD TURN THE BEAR.

I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT BEARS.



NOW SPIDERS ON THE OTHER HAND...

YOU WANT DRACULA? THAT CAN BE ARRANGED. BUT I'LL NEED SOMETHING IN RETURN.

YOUR LIFE ISN'T ENOUGH?

STICK TO KILLING VAMPIRES. YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE WITH ME.

SO YOU MADE A DEAL WITH THE OLD KING. WHAT KIND OF DEAL WOULD YOU OFFER THE NEW ONE?

HEY! WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO HEAR OUR PROPOSAL?



IT
GOES LIKE
THIS.

**AVENGERS
ASSEMBLE!**

I'VE BEEN A VAMPIRE
SINCE THE WOMB, WHEN
MY MOTHER GOT BIT.

I WAS BORN DRENCHED IN
HER BLOOD. AND I'VE ONLY
GOTTEN BLOODIER SINCE.

MUST BE WHY
THEY CALL ME
BLADE.

BUT I'M AN AVENGER NOW.
FIGHTING ALONGSIDE GODS
AND HULKS AND THE BLACK POPE
AND A LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM.

AS CHAIRMAN
OF THE AVENGERS,
I PROMISE YOU, THIS
VAMPIRE WAR
ENDS TODAY.

WHO CARES
ABOUT THE WAR?! I
WANT THE BLOOD OF
CAPTAIN AMERICA!

YOU AND EVERY
OTHER NAZI, BARONESS
BLOOD. YOU CAN SETTLE
FOR MY KNUCKLES.





AVENGERS SAVE THE
WORLD. THAT AIN'T
REALLY MY GIG.

HEY, BIG UGLY!
YOU KINDA LOOK
LIKE DRACULA!

AND I FEEL LIKE
HURTING SOMETHING
THAT LOOKS LIKE
DRACULA!

I'M THE GUY YOU CALL WHEN VAMPS
NEED STABBING AND STAKING. AND VAMPS
ALWAYS NEED STABBING AND STAKING.



GET HER, MY
LOVELIES! BLAST
THE BRUTE DOWN
TO SIZE!

GRRH! HULK
SEEN BIGGER
RATS IN
SUBWAY!

THOUGH I GOTTA SAY IT
DOES FEEL PRETTY GOOD...
TO BE OUTTA THE SHADOWS
FOR A CHANGE. THEY MAY
CALL ME THE DAYWALKER, BUT
I THINK I'D FORGOTTEN...

THE RATS ARE
HERE TO PICK YOUR
BONES CLEAN! AFTER
I TEAR ALL THE
FLESH OFF 'EM!



YOU
DOG WHO
HURT GHOST RIDER?
HRPH. WE BRING
SOMEONE WANT
TO MEET YOU.

...HOW IT
FELT TO WALK
IN THE LIGHT.



THUNDER
MASTER SAY YOU
THINK YOU BETTER
MURDER DOG
THAN THORI?!

THORI
MAKE MURDER
NOW!!!

I SOMETIMES WONDER
WHAT I'D BE IN A WORLD
WITHOUT VAMPIRES.



THERE GOES
YOUR GUN. NEXT
IT'LL BE YOUR
HEAD, COLONEL.

YOU'RE
PATHETIC, YOU
KNOW THAT,
BLADE?

MAYBE I COULD BE SOME
KINDA HERO LIKE CAPTAIN
CORNHUSKER OR THE METAL
MILLIONAIRE OVER THERE.



YOU COULD
HAVE BEEN A WARRIOR
IN THE NEW KINGDOM. BUT
INSTEAD YOU'LL JUST BE
ANOTHER BLOODSTAIN
ON MY BOOTS!

GAAGH!



NAH. WHO AM
I KIDDING?

SHUNK



I WOULDN'T BE ANY
HERO. I'D JUST BE
THE LAST MONSTER
LEFT STANDING.

YOU'RE
GONNA NEED
BIGGER
BOOTS.



BUT THAT'S OKAY, BECAUSE
BEING THE LAST VAMPIRE ON
THE FACE OF THE EARTH...

Y'NOW, I
TAKE THAT
BACK ABOUT
THE BOOTS.

GRRRRRGHH!!!



...WOULD BE A
GOOD DAMN
PROBLEM TO HAVE.

YOU
WON'T NEED
BOOTS WHERE
YOU'RE GOING,
SUCKHEAD!

CHERNOBYL.
THE RED FOREST.



THIS LAND...
IS SCARRED.



IRRADIATED.
ABANDONED.

SENDING ME HERE...
WAS THE RUSSIANS'
IDEA OF A JOKE.



EEP.



BUT I AM
NOT LAUGHING.

THEY THOUGHT
THIS LAND WOULD BE
DRACULA'S COFFIN.

PERHAPS THEY
FORGOT...



...WHAT
VAMPIRES DO
WITH COFFINS.



THE AVENGERS
ARE MANY THINGS.

VAMPIRE HUNTERS,
THEY ARE NOT.

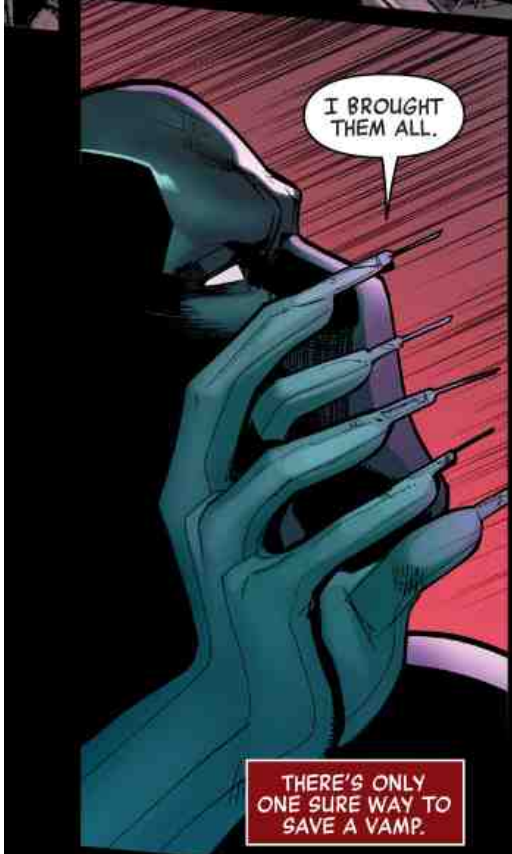
THE PANTHER IS STILL TALKING
ABOUT CURES. ABOUT DOING
EVERYTHING HE CAN TO SAVE THEM.



AFTER OUR
LAST ENCOUNTER,
SNOWSNAKE, I ANALYZED
THE FABRIC OF YOUR
GARMENTS. I KNOW YOU'RE
300 YEARS OLD, FROM
THE NARA PREFECTURE
OF JAPAN.

I KNOW YOU
SERVED THE YAGYŪ
CLAN BEFORE YOU FELL.
I CAN HELP RESTORE
YOUR HONOR.

I'VE BEEN
DEVELOPING SOME
POSSIBLE CURES FOR
YOUR CONDITION.



I BROUGHT
THEM ALL.

THERE'S ONLY
ONE SURE WAY TO
SAVE A VAMP.



THE
FOURTH REICH
WILL--

LADY, TAKE
IT FROM ME.
YOU'RE OLD
NEWS.

ALL IT TAKES IS A GOOD
STAKE, A STEADY HAND
AND A STRONG STOMACH.

ALL IT TAKES IS A MAN LIKE ME. ONLY THERE AIN'T NO OTHER MEN LIKE ME.



GAAGH!
YOU DAYWALKING
BASTARD!

YOU
HAVE NO
RIGHT TO DRAW
MY BLOOD!



GAAAGH!



I AM
PUREBORN VAMPIRE!
STRONGER THAN YOU
IN EVERY WAY!

I WAS
MEANT TO FEAST
ON THE HUMANS OF
THIS WORLD LIKE THE
PIGS AND CATTLE
THEY ARE!



YOU KNOW
WHO *ELSE* SAID THAT?
EVERY DAMN VAMPIRE I
EVER TURNED INTO A
PILE OF *STINKING*
ASH!

YOU KNOW
THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN THOSE
VAMPIRES AND
ME?



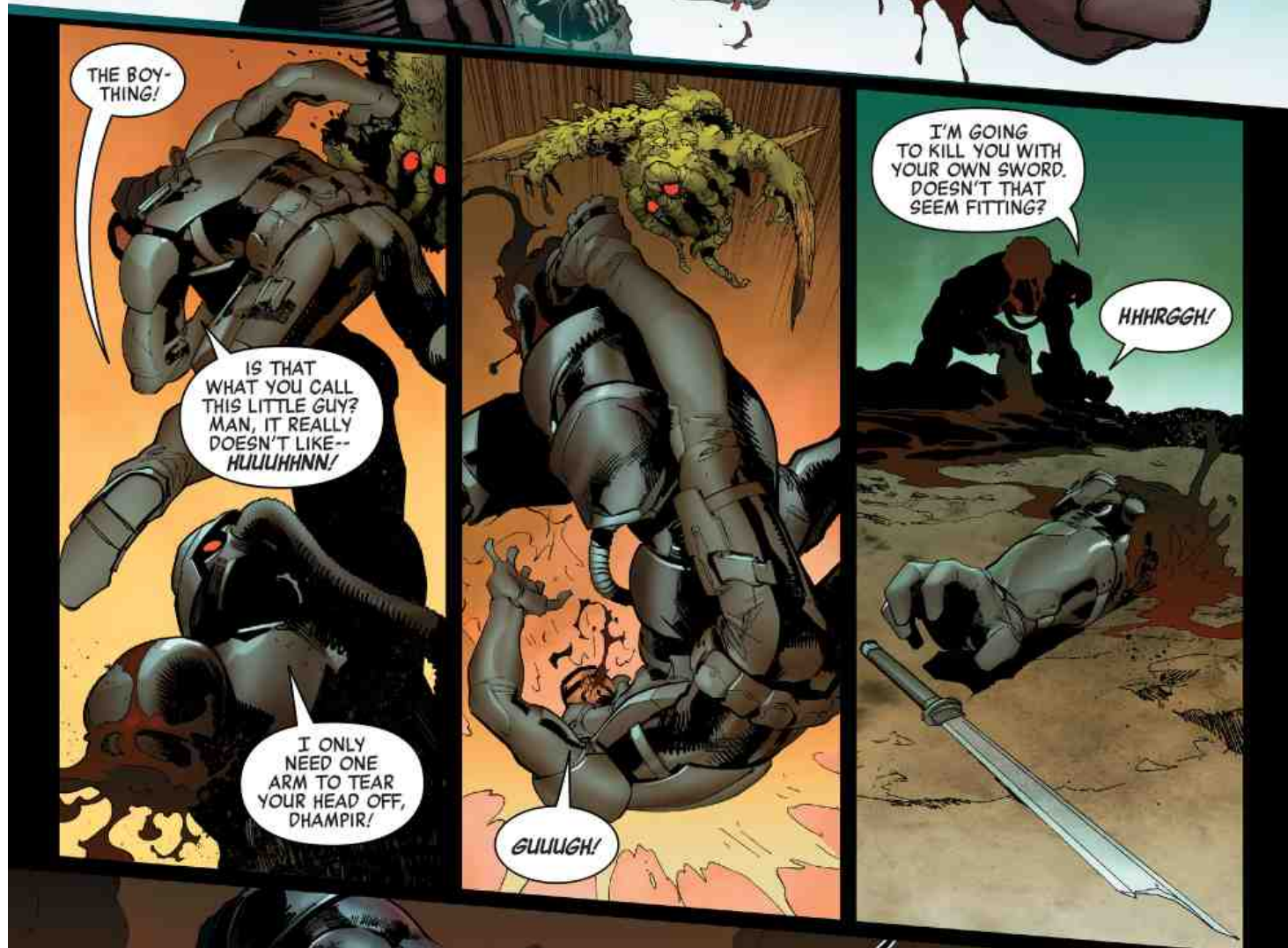
GULLUGH!!!

I'VE
ALREADY
WON.



AAAARRGGH!

NAH, THE
DIFFERENCE
WAS *THEY* HAD
TWO ARMS.



THE BOY-
THING!

IS THAT
WHAT YOU CALL
THIS LITTLE GUY?
MAN, IT REALLY
DOESN'T LIKE--
HUUUHHNN!

I ONLY
NEED ONE
ARM TO TEAR
YOUR HEAD OFF,
DHAMPIR!

GULUUGH!

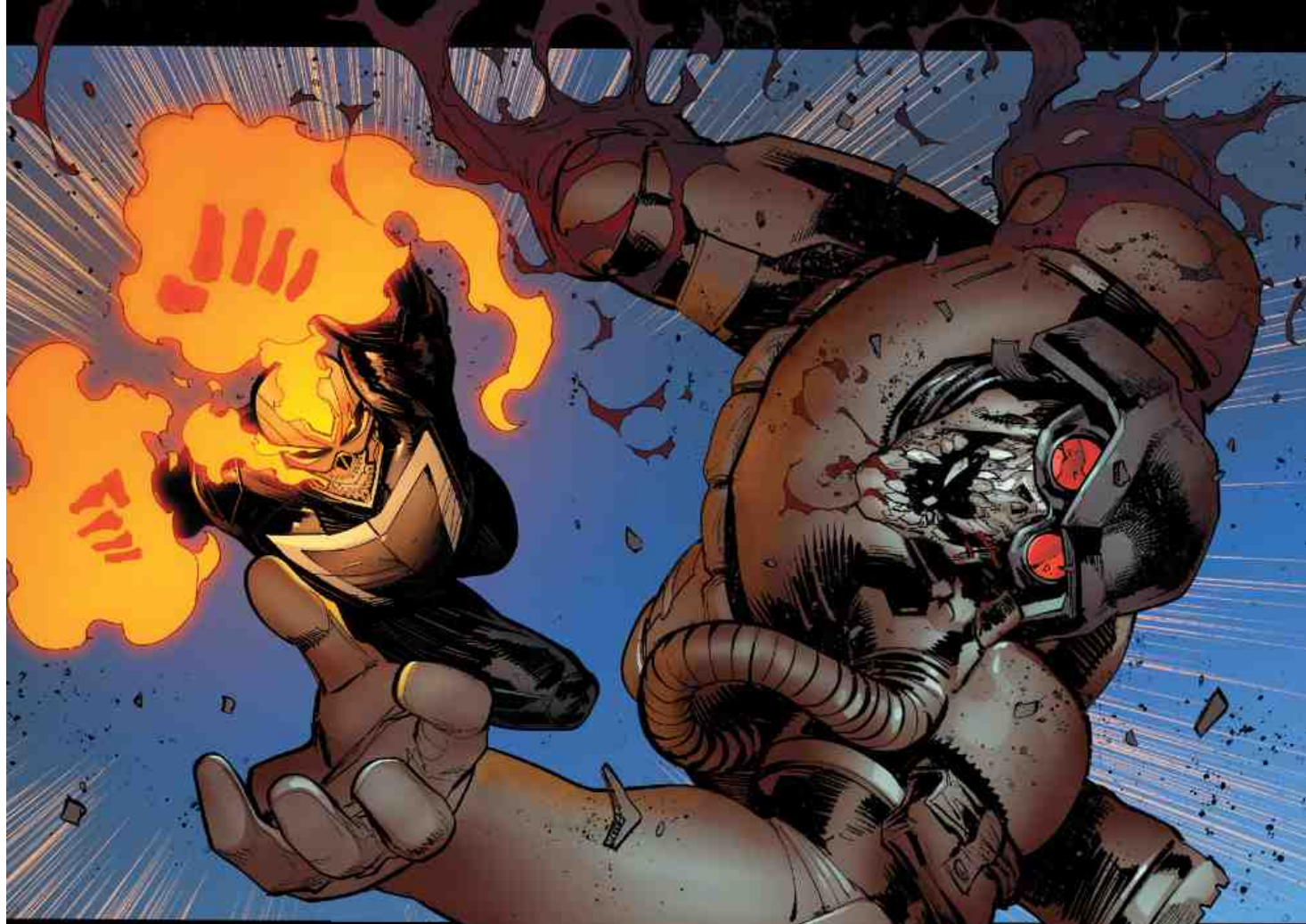
I'M GOING
TO KILL YOU WITH
YOUR OWN SWORD.
DOESN'T THAT
SEEM FITTING?

HHHRGGH!



BECAUSE
YOU'RE NOT
EVEN WORTH
MY FANGS.

YEAH.
ABOUT THOSE
FANGS.



GUESS YOU'LL
BE SUCKING BLOOD
THROUGH A STRAW
FROM NOW ON.

THAT'S FOR
MAKING ME FIGHT
MY FRIENDS.

NOT BAD,
KID. DIDN'T THINK
YOU'D COME BACK.
NOW MOVE ASIDE
AND LET ME
FINISH IT.

BLADE. DON'T
DO IT. HE'S
BEATEN.

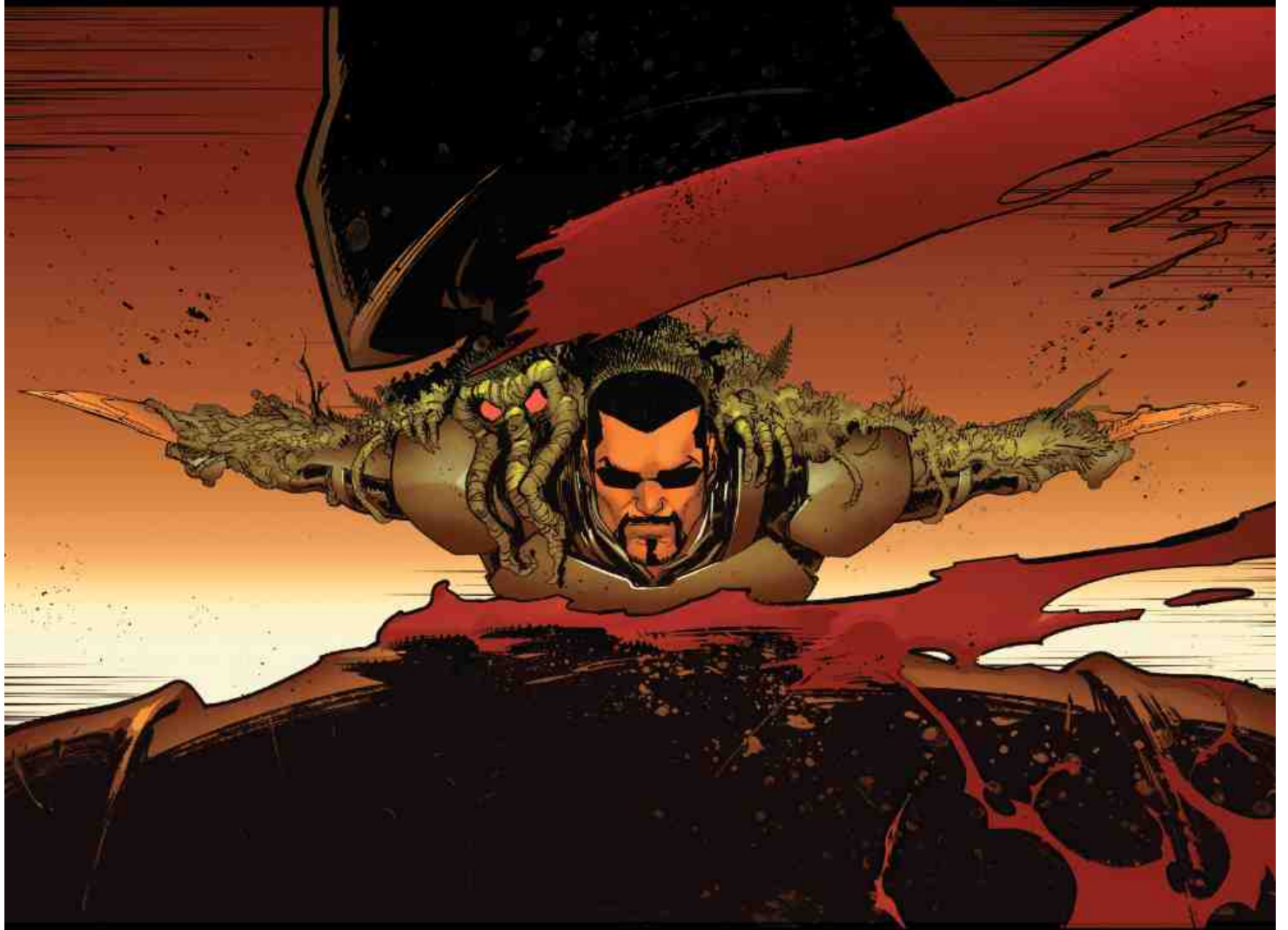
NOT
IF HE'S STILL
BREATHING.

THEN WE BRING
HIM IN. YOUR
WAY... ISN'T HOW
AVENGERS
OPERATE.

THEN I GUESS
I'M ABOUT TO
QUIT THE
AVENGERS.

NO. YOU'RE
NOT. BECAUSE YOU
WANT TO BELIEVE IN
THAT CURE JUST
AS MUCH AS--





DAMN IT, ERIC.

I DO BELIEVE, T'CHALLA. I BELIEVE YOU'LL FIND THAT CURE SOMEDAY.

BUT NOT EVERYBODY WILL DESERVE IT. CERTAINLY NOT HIM.

HELL, NOT ME EITHER.

WE'LL TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU DESERVE...WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN.

WHO SAID I WAS GOING BACK TO THE--



GRRRRGGH!!!
TOO MANY! HULK HAVE TO KILL RATS ALL AT ONCE!

JENNIFER!
STAND DOWN!
YOU'RE ERUPTING WITH TOO MUCH GAMMA ENERGY!
YOU'RE GOING TO--



BOY, AND WE THOUGHT THE RUSSIANS HATED US BEFORE. WE JUST BLEW UP A HULK IN THEIR BACKYARD.

THIS IS CAROL. I HAVE JENNIFER. SHE'S OKAY. JUST COVERED WITH RAT BITES. AND A LITTLE EMBARRASSED.

WE LOST VISUAL ON THE VAMPIRES! DOES ANYONE HAVE EYES ON THEM?

ARE THERE ANY VAMPIRES LEFT?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ANSWER HIM?

YEAH, CAP. THERE'S AT LEAST ONE OF US HERE.

BUT THE LEGION GOT AWAY AGAIN. OR, WELL...

...MOST OF THEM DID.

THOR! KING OF ALL DOGS!

"WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TRUSTED THOSE RUSSIANS."



I DO NOT **TRUST** THE WINTER GUARD, CAPTAIN MARVEL-- NOT SO LONG AS THE RED WIDOW IS IN CHARGE.

BUT WE HAD LITTLE CHOICE, SHORT OF A FULL-SCALE BATTLE WITH THEM.

WHICH IS DEFINITELY COMING AT SOME POINT.

THEY STILL HAVE DRACULA SOMEWHERE IN HIDING. NOW THEY HAVE A PRISON FULL OF VAMPIRES. I DON'T LIKE IT.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS WAR OF THE UNDEAD IS TRULY FINISHED?



I BELIEVE OUR FRIEND HERE COULD ANSWER THAT. WHEN HE FEELS LIKE TALKING.



WHAT I FEEL LIKE...



...IS TEARING YOUR FACES OFF!

OPEN THIS CAGE!



GOD, I'VE GOT TO GET BETTER AT CONTROLLING MY NEW GAMMA POWERS. I COULD'VE KILLED US ALL.



NAY, I WOULD HAVE BEEN JUST FINE.



"KILLED US ALL." HMPH.





"...I'LL SEE
YOU WHEN YOU
COME HOME."

IT WAS THE
DHAMPIR **BLADE**
WHO DID THIS TO HIM.
BUT THE COLONEL
DID HIS PART.

WE
BELIEVE HE
STILL DESERVES
A PLACE
IN THE NEW
KINGDOM.

THAT IS FOR
ME TO JUDGE.
AFTER ALL...

...HE'S MY
SON.

FATHER,
IS THIS IT? IS
THIS THE PROMISED
LAND I SEE?
IT'S...

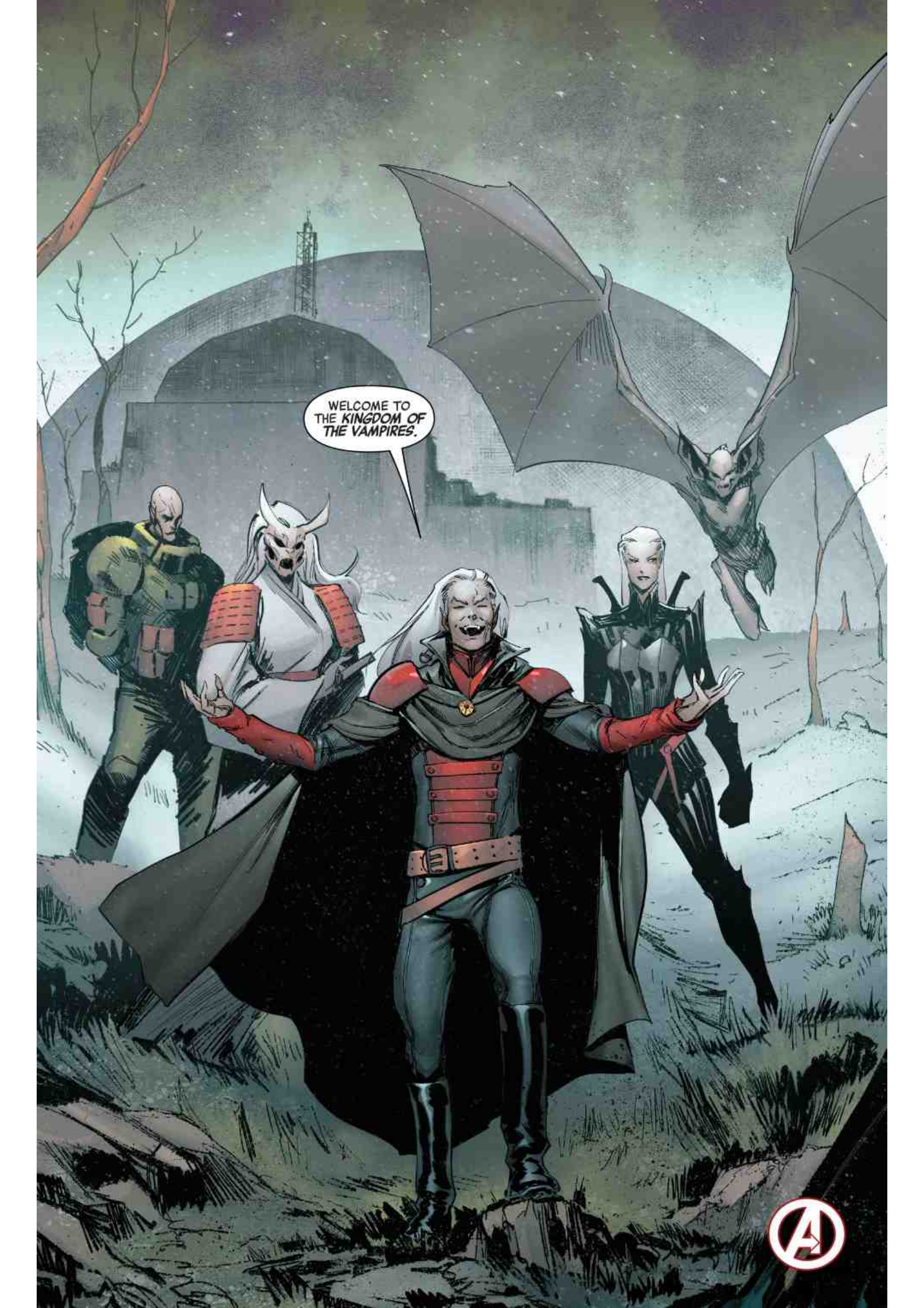
IT'S
BEAUTIFUL.

YES, XARUS.
YOU DID WELL,
BOY.

YOU ALL
DID EXACTLY AS
I WANTED.

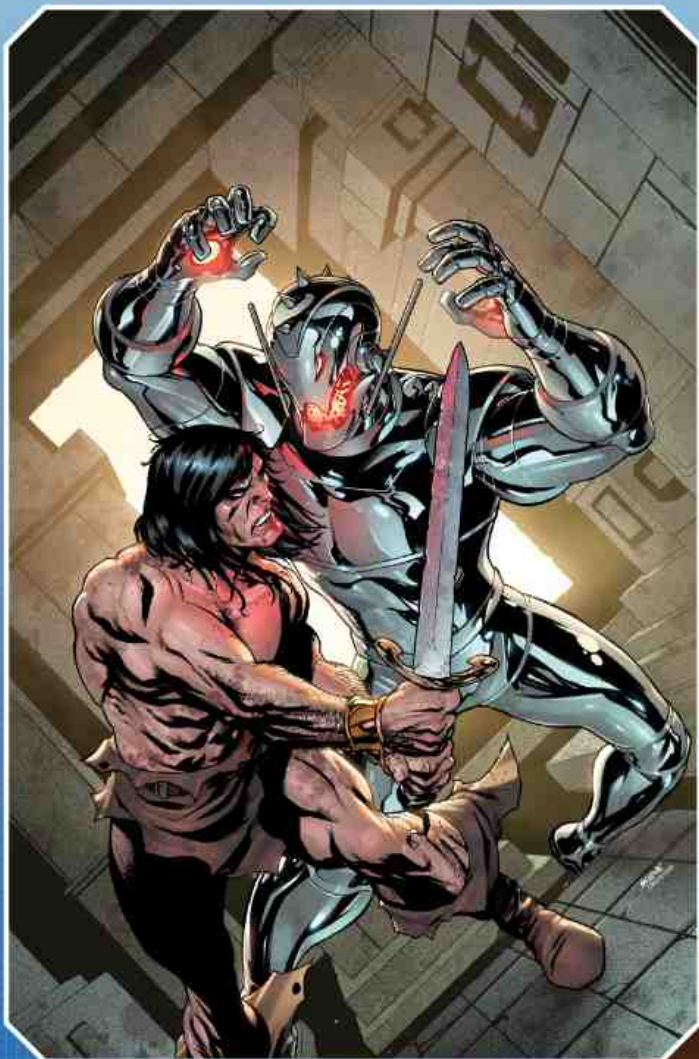
WE ARE
FREE NOW.
FREE TO REBUILD,
STRONGER THAN
EVER.

WELCOME
HOME, MY
BLOODY
DISCIPLES.



WELCOME TO
THE KINGDOM OF
THE VAMPIRES.





MIKE MCKONE & JESUS ABURTOV
13 CONAN VS. VARIANT



**CARLOS PACHECO, RAFAEL FONTERIZ
& DAVID CURIEL**
14 SKRULLS VARIANT



MATTEO SCALERA & RAIN BEREDO
14 VARIANT



GERALD PAREL
15 CAPTAIN MARVEL VARIANT



MIKE MCKONE & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
17 C2E2 VARIANT

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KINGDOM OF VAMPIRES!

TRANSYLVANIA BURNS as a battle of the bloodsuckers throws the world into chaos! But the mysterious Shadow Colonel and his new Legion of the Unliving have one question on their murderous minds: Where is Dracula? And if the Avengers find him first, will he be friend or foe? Earth's Mightiest Heroes will have to call in an expert — welcome to the Avengers, Blade! But is Ghost Rider about to become a deadly enemy? When the dust settles and a new vampire order is established, who will be the Lord of the Damned? Plus: The Iron Fist of 1,000,000 BC stars in another journey into prehistory! Get to know the primordial woman who was the first to harness the power of the heart of the dragon Shou-Lao!



T+

MARVEL

COLLECTING **AVENGERS (2018) #13-17** — BY JASON AARON,
DAVID MARQUEZ, ANDREA SORRENTINO, ERICK ARCINIEGA AND JUSTIN PONSOR.

